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CONTENTS

NORTH CAROLINA NEWSPAPERS BEFORE 1790

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	7
II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEWSPAPERS	11
III. MAKE-UP AND CIRCULATION	16
IV. THE NEWS	24
V. LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITORS	31
VI. EDITORIAL COMMENT	36
VII. THE ADVERTISEMENTS:	
1. <i>Description of Advertisements</i>	40
2. <i>Trade and Commerce</i>	41
3. <i>Manufacturing</i>	46
4. <i>Labor</i>	48
5. <i>Travel</i>	50
6. <i>Immigration and Emigration</i>	52
7. <i>Towns</i>	53
8. <i>Education</i>	55
9. <i>Publication and Sale of Books</i>	57
APPENDIX A—A List of North Carolina Newspapers Pub- lished before 1790 Which Are Preserved in the Library of the University of North Carolina or in the Archives of the North Carolina Historical Commission	60
APPENDIX B—Letters Selected from North Carolina News- papers, 1787-1789	63

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I

INTRODUCTION

Ten years ago it was practically impossible to make an adequate study of the early newspapers of North Carolina. Of necessity such a study must depend primarily upon an analysis of the papers themselves, and the papers were not at hand to be analyzed. Most of the issues had been either lost or destroyed; and those which had been preserved were scattered among such widely separated points as London, Worcester, Chapel Hill, Washington, New Orleans, New York, Raleigh and Philadelphia. The investigator neither knew what copies were in existence nor, had he known, would he have found it convenient to make extended journeys for the purpose of examining them.¹ It was necessary that a careful search be instituted in order to discover the location of those papers which had been preserved, and then that an effort be made to assemble as many of them as possible at a place where they would be easily accessible to the student. This work was undertaken in 1920 by the North Carolina Historical Commission, having been facilitated by the publication, two years earlier, of Clarence S. Brigham's *Bibliography of American Newspapers*;² and so successfully was it carried on that there is today in Raleigh a collection which includes, with a few exceptions, either the originals or photostat copies of all North Carolina newspapers printed before 1800 which are known to be in existence.³

¹ In 1891 Stephen B. Weeks published his *Press of North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century*, in which he included an account of the newspapers of the period. Since the only papers printed before 1790 to which he had access consisted of an incomplete file of James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 4 July, 1777, to 30 November, 1778, he was forced to rely largely upon material which was in many ways not trustworthy and which failed to give many of the essential facts. It is surprising how much information he was able to assemble from such sources as were then available.

² North Carolina Historical Commission, *Eighth Biennial Report*, 1918-1920, p. 27.

³ There is another similar collection in Chapel Hill. For a list of those papers printed before 1790 which have been preserved, see Appendix A. The work of collecting is not yet complete. Only three years ago there were found, glued to

There are still great gaps in the files. Very often just that number of a paper is wanted which cannot be had. A complete set of newspapers would undoubtedly shed much light upon the history of North Carolina and would perhaps definitely settle disputes over questions such as whether Mecklenburg County declared for independence in 1775, or why the state in 1788 refused to adopt the federal constitution. It is tantalizing to have only one or two issues of certain papers and to realize that, with a little foresight on the part of those who lived a century and a half ago, all of them might have been preserved. But although there are gaps, the work of collecting has been done with sufficient thoroughness for the investigator to gain some notion of what these early papers were, although, of course, his knowledge is obliged to be incomplete to the extent that the files of the papers themselves are incomplete. But he can at least determine when, where, and by whom they were printed, how large they were, how they were made up, and what they contained of news, letters to the editors, literary contributions and advertisements.

Before 1790 the newspapers of North Carolina were in many respects similar to other American papers. Nearly all the papers of the period were small sheets of only four pages; were printed not more often than once a week; had a small circulation; included a great deal of news from a distance and very little of a local nature; contained contributions on a variety of subjects; copied extensively from each other and from English papers; and printed advertisements of runaway slaves, of houses and goods for sale, and of ships sailing for various ports. In such matters there is little to choose between *The Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, *The New York Mercury*, *The Maryland Gazette*, James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, and numerous others.

Although North Carolina papers were in these respects similar to those of other parts of America, in other ways they

the covers of volumes of county court records, certain copies of James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* for the years 1751 and 1752. Before this discovery took place it was thought that the *Gazette* had not been published so early. See *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. II, pp. 83-89.

differed from them. In the first place, they were later in making their appearance. *The Boston News-Letter*, the first news-sheet in British North America, made its debut in 1704; and by the middle of the eighteenth century seven of the colonies possessed papers. But James Davis, the father of printing in North Carolina, did not begin to publish his periodical until 1751. Of the Thirteen Colonies, only New Hampshire, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware and Georgia established newspapers later than did North Carolina.⁴ The reason for this tardiness is not far to seek. The newspaper is the creature of the city. But North Carolina's civilization was rural. In the whole period before 1790 none of the six towns in which papers were printed had a white population of more than one thousand. Five of these towns, New Bern,⁵ Wilmington, Halifax, Edenton and Fayetteville were in the east, while only one, Hillsborough,⁶ was in the west.

In the second place, North Carolina newspapers differed from those in other states in that they were not as permanently established and did not bring in as large financial returns. They were printed less regularly than *The South Carolina Gazette*, *The Boston News-Letter*, *The Virginia Gazette*, and a number of others. None of them was able, as were several in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania and elsewhere, to continue uninterrupted publication for a period of several decades. Their circulation was much smaller than that of the papers in the more populous towns of America, and therefore they did not pay so well.

In the third place, they were less original than some of those of Boston, New York and Philadelphia, although as a rule they came up to the standard of those published outside these three towns. They contained much less expression of editorial opin-

⁴ For a discussion of American newspapers in the eighteenth century, see Thomas, Isaiah, *History of Printing in America* (1874), Vol. II; also Nelson, William, "Some Account of the American Newspapers, Particularly of the Eighteenth Century. . . ." (In *New Jersey Archives*, Vols. XI, XII, and XIX). The latter is arranged alphabetically and goes only from *Alabama* to *New Hampshire*.

⁵ The spelling was later changed to *Newbern*.

⁶ *Hillsborough* was later abbreviated by the omission of the last three letters.

ion than such papers as *The Massachusetts Spy* and *The New England Courant*. They never, in criticizing the government, went as far as *The New-York Weekly Journal*.⁷ They did not engage in controversies with each other as bitter as that between *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and *The American Weekly Mercury*. They contained no literary contributions which would compare favorably with those of *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. On the whole they were less original, less enterprising, less daring, and less able to influence the thought and action of their readers than were those of Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

⁷ Exception must be made in the case of Andrew Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette*, in which the editor freely expressed his opinions, thus winning the disapproval of the governor, the council, and many influential people in and around Wilmington.

II

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEWSPAPERS

The first paper established in the colony was *The North Carolina Gazette*, which was printed at New Bern by James Davis.¹ Before 1920 writers placed the first issue in 1755,² but recently several numbers have been discovered which make it certain that number one appeared four years earlier. The oldest extant copy is number 15, published 15 November, 1751; using that date as a basis for computation, it seems probable that 9 August, 1751, was the date of the first issue.³ Davis continued to publish *The North Carolina Gazette* until as late as 1778. In general his purpose seems to have been to print his paper weekly, but he had no regular program—especially during the earlier period of its existence. He changed the day of publication several times; he often suspended for months and even for years; and sometimes, when news was plentiful, he seems to have published more often than once a week.⁴

The next paper to appear in the colony was another *North Carolina Gazette* and was printed in Wilmington.⁵ Only two

¹ This article does not discuss the lives of the various printers. For information on this point see Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, *passim*.

² Thomas Isaiah, *op. cit.*, p. 166. Weeks, S. B., "The Pre-Revolutionary Printers of North Carolina" (In *The North Carolina Booklet*, Vol. XV, No. 2, p. 112); cited in Connor, R. D. W., *History of North Carolina, Colonial and Revolutionary Periods* (1919), p. 207.

³ This date is correct provided the paper was printed regularly during the first few months of its existence, and provided there was not an earlier series with another set of numbers. Weeks had access to a copy for 18 October, 1759, which was number 200. Dating back, he calculated that number one must have appeared in December, 1755. Weeks, S. B., *The Press of North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 17-18. Such a calculation was reasonable and would have been correct except for the fact that *The Gazette* was not printed regularly.

⁴ See Appendix A. In 1764, Davis began to print *The North Carolina Magazine*; or, *Universal Intelligencer*, which, in spite of its name, seems to have been a newspaper, the second in the colony. No original or photostat copy of this paper is at present either in Raleigh or in Chapel Hill. Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, p. 21. A file of this paper, 6 July, 1764, to 18 January, 1765, is in the Library of Congress. Brigham, C. S., *op. cit.*, p. 308.

⁵ Davis's paper was called *The North Carolina Gazette*; Steuart's merely *North Carolina Gazette*.

of the regular issues and one "continuation" are accessible.⁶ Publication, which apparently was begun on 17 October, 1764, was continued only until 1766 or 1767. Andrew Steuart, the printer, got into difficulties with the authorities because he published in the issue of 12 February, 1766, an "inflammatory" letter from Cross Creek.⁷ Accordingly he had lost his position as printer to the government; and thus, probably, forfeited the support of many of the influential citizens of the lower Cape Fear region.⁸

Next came *The Cape Fear Mercury*, which was printed in Wilmington by Adam Boyd on the same press Steuart had used.⁹ The first issue probably appeared on 13 October, 1769; and, although there was at least one temporary suspension,¹⁰ publication was continued until as late as 1 September, 1775. The paper was supposed to appear on Friday, but that it did not always do so is evident from a study of the numbers and dates of issue. Upon at least one occasion not more than four days elapsed between the printing of two numbers; and sometimes there was an interval of as much as two weeks.

Thus when the Revolution began, two newspapers were being printed, Boyd's *Cape Fear Mercury* and Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*. The first of these was soon discontinued and its publisher, on 4 January, 1776, became an ensign in the First North Carolina Regiment of the Continental Army.¹¹ The second, while published irregularly until the end of November, 1778, did not outlast the war because Davis, after the son who was helping him was drafted for the army, was unable to find anyone to take his place in the printing business.¹² In all

⁶ Brigham, *op. cit.*, p. 321, says that in the British Public Record Office is the regular issue for 20 November, 1765, and that in the archives of the North Carolina Historical Commission is a "continuation" of this same issue. The writer has seen neither of these papers, although he has searched for the one said to be in Raleigh.

⁷ The name, *Cross Creek*, was later changed to *Fayetteville*.

⁸ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, p. 30; *Colonial Records of North Carolian*, Vol. VII, pp. 187-188.

⁹ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰ *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. IX, pp. 1118-1119.

¹¹ Ashe, S. A. (editor), *Biographical History of North Carolina*, Vol. V, p. 19.

¹² Letter from James Davis to Governor Caswell (in *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. XIII, pp. 259-260).

probability no newspaper was printed in the state during the latter part of the Revolution.¹³

Soon after the cessation of hostilities a number of papers sprang up, so that from August, 1783, until the end of December, 1789, no less than eight were introduced to the public. *The North Carolina Gazette or Impartial Intelligencer and Weekly Advertiser* was published in New Bern by Robert Keith and Company, on the old presses and type of James Davis. The first number appeared on 28 August, 1783;¹⁴ and the paper seems to have been continued at least as late as the following January.¹⁵ In 1784 a paper was being printed at Halifax, as is indicated by a statement of James Iredell, who, writing to his wife on 28 March, said: "They have begun to print a newspaper at Halifax, which is to be continued weekly."¹⁶ Unfortunately, no copy of either of these papers is available.

The State Gazette of North-Carolina, belonging at first to Hodge and Blanchard, and later to Hodge and Wills, seems to have begun publication on 17 November, 1785.¹⁷ Until the last of March, 1788, the paper was printed in New Bern;¹⁸ but sometime between March and 9 July of the same year the printers were persuaded to move their business to Edenton.¹⁹ A suspension of nearly two months was caused by the removal,²⁰ the first number appearing in the latter town on 8 September, 1788.²¹ Publication was continued in Edenton for a number

¹³ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁴ *The North Carolina University Magazine*, Vol. II, p. 40; cited in Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, p. 37.

¹⁵ Archibald Maclaine, writing from Wilmington to George Hooper in Charleston, 4 February, said that the newspaper published at New Bern was "not worth having." *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. XVII, p. 128. He was almost certainly referring to Keith's paper.

¹⁶ McRee, G. J., *Life and Correspondence of James Iredell*, Vol. II, p. 96; cited in Brigham, C. S., *op. cit.*, p. 300. This was probably the paper of Thomas Davis. *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. XVI, pp. 195-196.

¹⁷ The earliest extant issue of the paper, Vol. II, no. 99, is dated 4 October, 1787.

¹⁸ The issue for 27 March has been preserved.

¹⁹ McRee, G. J., *op. cit.*, p. 231, note; cited by Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, p. 39.

²⁰ This calculation is based upon the numbering of the issues before and after removal.

²¹ The issue for 3 September, 1789, stated that that number completed a year's publication in Edenton.

of years. The issue for 30 March, 1792, was the last to be printed by Hodge and Wills. From that date until the last of October, 1797, the paper was brought out by Henry Wills alone. On 2 November, 1797, James Wills, the brother of Henry, printed his first issue; he continued publication until at least as late as 20 February, 1799.

Both in New Bern and in Edenton Hodge and Wills appear to have faced competition. In New Bern this was furnished by *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, publication of which apparently began 4 January, 1786, and certainly lasted until as late as 19 December, 1787; in Edenton by *The Edenton Intelligencer*, the paper of Maurice Murphy. Number one of this second paper probably appeared 23 October, 1787; publication was continued at least as late as 4 June, 1788, although how much longer cannot be determined.²²

The only paper which existed west of Fayetteville before 1790 was *The North Carolina Gazette*, published at Hillsboro by Thomas, the son of James Davis. The one copy which has been preserved, that of 16 February, 1786, either had no number to begin with, or else its number has been torn off; there is therefore no basis for calculating the date of origin. However, it is almost certain that it was being printed at least as early as the preceding July.²³ Thomas Davis, who seems to have been publishing a paper in Halifax in 1784, had moved by the following year to Hillsboro. How long after 16 February, 1786, his paper was printed is unknown.

Wilmington was apparently without a newspaper from the latter part of 1775 until 1788, when Bowen and Howard established *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*. Number one probably appeared on 5 March of the latter year.²⁴ The paper could hardly have been published very long, because the partnership of the printers must have been dissolved in 1788 or 1789, when Howard went to Fayetteville to establish another news-sheet.

²² The issue for 4 June, 1788, has been preserved. The number for 9 April is called *Intelligencer*; that for 4 June, *Intelligencer*.

²³ *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. XVII, pp. 491, 500, 504.

²⁴ The only copy preserved, Vol. I, no. 16, is dated 18 June, 1788.

In Fayetteville, 24 August, 1789, Sibley and Howard brought out the *Fayetteville Gazette*.²⁵ Although only four of the issues for 1789 are in existence, they are very valuable because they contain several articles in favor of or opposed to the adoption of the federal constitution. Sometime between 12 October, 1789, and 1 February, 1790, the name of the paper was changed to *The North Carolina Chronicle; or, Fayetteville Gazette*,²⁶ and under this title publication was continued until 7 March, 1791, when the editors declared that because of lack of funds they would have to discontinue the sheet.²⁷

Before 1790, then, there were published in North Carolina no less than twelve different newspapers. Of some of these we have today no copies, of others only one or two, and of still others several dozen, but of none do we have anything like a complete file.²⁸ Of the twelve, eleven were in the east, only one in the west. New Bern could boast of five, Wilmington of three, Edenton of two, and Fayetteville, Halifax and Hillsboro of one each.²⁹ Four of the twelve were established before the Revolution, eight afterwards. Of them all, James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* seems to have survived the longest, but even its publication was frequently suspended.

²⁵ On page one the publishers announced to the public that they were proud of the fact that their paper was printed on the first printing press manufactured in North Carolina. This is the only evidence which has been preserved as to the building of this first press in the state.

²⁶ The issues for these two dates are in existence.

²⁷ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 44, 45, note; see below, p. 22.

²⁸ See Appendix A.

²⁹ The apparent mistake in addition is accounted for by the fact that one paper, *The State Gazette of North Carolina*, was moved from Newbern to Edenton. In the total it has been counted as only one sheet.

III

MAKE-UP AND CIRCULATION

Certain questions naturally arise as to the make-up, contents, circulation and finances of these early North Carolina newspapers. Some of these queries can be definitely answered; to others because of lack of evidence the answers must be somewhat vague.

The size of the sheet and of the type varied from time to time. Each issue of a paper invariably contained four pages¹ of from one to three columns each; but the dimensions of these pages and the size of the type were changed at irregular intervals.² The size of the page of James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, for instance, was altered no less than eight times during the twenty-seven years of its existence, the smallest being about³ 9¼ by 6 inches, the largest about 17½ by 10 inches. Most of the other papers varied in size from time to time, although one of them, *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, was able before 1790 to maintain a sheet of regular size,⁴ 14¾ by 8½ inches. The smallest sheet which has been preserved is the issue of Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette* for 26 February, 1766, each page of which measures 9 by 5½ inches. The largest is the number of *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser* for 18 June, 1788, the size of each page being 17½ by 10½ inches. When the sheet was large, ordinarily the type would likewise be large; when the page was small, the type also would usually be reduced in size, so that it was possible to print approximately as much matter on a small sheet as on a large one.

The size of the sheet seems to have depended largely upon the supply and price of paper. This article was not manufactured in North Carolina during colonial days and therefore had

¹ Sometimes supplements of from one to eight pages were issued.

² Two or more different sizes of type were often used in one number of a paper.

³ The pages of most of these papers are cut so irregularly that it is almost impossible to measure them exactly. Thus it is necessary to say "about."

⁴ Irregularities in cutting must be allowed for.

to be imported. During the Revolution a paper mill was built but could not supply the demand. After 1783 there was less difficulty in obtaining paper, but even then it was not plentiful. When it was fairly cheap and easy to obtain, the size of the newspaper page was usually large; when it was scarce and expensive, the page would usually be small. Sometimes the size of the sheet was reduced without a corresponding reduction of the type because the publishers had at hand little material suitable for printing.

Similar factors influenced the regularity or irregularity of the appearance of a news-sheet. If there was little news, if the publisher happened to be out of town for a few days, if a sufficient amount of paper could not be had, or if funds happened to be running short, the sheet might not come out at the usual time. On the other hand, if conditions were favorable, publication might occur more often than the public expected. Thus, while all these papers were nominally weeklies, there were many occasions upon which they did not appear at regular seven-day intervals.

Although there was some little variety in the make-up of these newspapers, they were in general put together in the following fashion. At the top of page one were to be found the title, the imprint,⁵ and the number and date of issue. Two papers, Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette* and *The Cape Fear Mercury*, printed in the title of some of their numbers a cut of the royal arms. A few illustrations of headings and imprints are worth quoting. On page one of *The North Carolina Gazette* for 15 April, 1757, was: "The Noth Carolina Gazette With the Freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic." At the foot of page four was: "Newbern: Printed by James Davis at the Printing-Office in Front-Street; where all Persons may be supplied with this Paper, at 16s. per Annum, and where Advertisements of a moderate Length are inserted for Three Shillings the first Week, and Two Shillings for every Week after. And where Book-Binding is done reasonable." *Martin's North Carolina*

⁵ The imprint was often to be found at the foot of the last page, and sometimes did not appear at all.

Gazette carried the quotation: "Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur. Vir." Thomas Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* claimed to be "Influenced by all parties, but restrained by none." *The Edenton Intelligencer* was truly patriotic in declaring: "Where LIBERTY dwells there is my COUNTRY." All of these mottoes seem to have been taken, either *verbatim* or with slight change, from the newspapers of other parts of America.⁶

Pages one and two and part of page three, were filled with bits of news from Europe and from the settlements up and down the Atlantic Seaboard, and often with a brief item from the town in which the paper was printed. On page three, after the news, came advertisements. Page four was filled with a "Poet's Corner," more advertisements, and perhaps a letter or two to the publisher. Such was the usual method of arrangement. There were, however, a number of other schemes which were often used. Advertisements might be so numerous that they filled almost the entire paper; or they might be omitted altogether. There might be no local news; or the sheet might be filled with it, to the exclusion of any other news. Several letters to the printer might be included in one number of a paper; or it might be that not one would appear for months. Sometimes there was quite a little padding; sometimes none at all.

What the circulation of any of these papers was, it is impossible definitely to say. That it could not have been large is evident. Though they were published in the larger towns: Newbern, Wilmington, Edenton, Fayetteville, Halifax and Hillsboro, the population of these places was so small that it is difficult to see how they could support papers at all. Wilmington, called "our metropolis," and probably the most populous town in the colony, seems to have had less than eight hundred people when, in 1764, her first news-sheet made its appearance;⁷ even as late as 1820 her population numbered only 2633,

⁶ A number of mottoes of American papers for the period are quoted in Thomas, Isaiah, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁷ *Journal of a Lady of Quality* (New Haven, 1921), p. 283.

of whom less than 1100 were white.⁸ The field for newspapers offered by other towns was little or no better. Edenton in 1786 contained 1112 people, of whom only 480 were white.⁹ Hillsboro as late as 1790 could count only 36 white polls;¹⁰ Fayetteville the same year contained 274 heads of families;¹¹ and Newbern before 1790 could hardly have had more than 1000 white people.¹² It seems impossible that the inhabitants of any of these towns could have purchased more than 275 copies of a single issue of a news-sheet; in all probability the largest circulation of any North Carolina paper in the town in which it was printed was not more than 150, while the average must have been less than 100.

If it is difficult to estimate the circulation of a paper within the town in which it was published, it is almost impossible to find out how many copies went to the surrounding country. Certain it is, however, that there were in the rural districts many people who were eager to learn what they could about current events and who thus would be glad to have news-sheets. That such people did actually subscribe may be inferred from the fact that they sent letters and contributions of poetry to the printers, and that the papers published advertisements which were obviously intended for their eyes.¹³ The advertisements

⁸ Coon, C. L., *The Beginnings of Public Education in North Carolina*, Vol. I (Raleigh, N. C.; 1908), p. 188. If, in 1764, half the population was negro; and if one white person in five subscribed to Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette*, the circulation of that paper in Wilmington would have amounted to less than one hundred.

⁹ *State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. XVIII, p. 434.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 1313.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-464.

¹² Thirty years later her white population numbered 1475. Coon, C. L., *loc. cit.*

¹³ The issue of *Martin's North Carolina Gazette* (Newbern) for 11 July, 1787, contained a letter to the printer from Long Island on Holston, more than 300 miles distant in what is now Tennessee; and in the number for 15 August, 1787, was a communication from "Westfields, near Salisbury," nearly 200 miles away. *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* contained a number of such letters to the publisher: a series of five from "Camden" (7 and 14 May, 4 June, 2 and 23 July, 1789), one from "Gates" (28 May, 1789), one from "Scuppernong" (11 June, 1789), one from "Tyrrel," and one from "Perquimons" (30 July, 1789). Contributions of poetry from the country districts, or the editors' acknowledgement of such contributions, may be found in James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 24 March and 12 May, 1775; in *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 11 July, 1787; in *The Edenton Intelligencer*, 9 April, and 4 June, 1788; and in the *Fayetteville Gazette*, 14 and 21 September, 1789. There were numerous advertisements which were

also indicate that several papers circulated in towns other than those in which they were printed. Notices of lots for sale, of public auction of goods, of boats to be disposed of, of goods in stock in some store—such advertisements for one town appeared fairly often in the newspapers of another.¹⁴ Conclusive evidence that at least one paper had a wide circulation is furnished by a statement in *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*:¹⁵ "This gazette is forwarded regularly once in a fortnight, in [to] the followings towns, Kinston, Greenville, Tarborough,¹⁶ Halifax, Warrenton, Louisburg, Oxford, Williamsburg, and Harrisburg, by the Western Post, and to Wilmington, Washington, and Edenton, by the Continental Post every week."¹⁷

It is impossible, then, to make any definite statement as to the number of subscribers to any of these newspapers, but it can be asserted that, while no paper was sold very extensively in the town in which it was published, several circulated fairly widely in neighboring towns and surrounding country. *The Cape Fear Mercury* was read in the Cape Fear region; *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* in the Albemarle section; and both James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* and *Martin's North Carolina Gazette* in the east generally. Of all the journals, James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* seems to have come nearer than any other to serving as a medium of expression for the whole of North Carolina, but this was possible because during most of its existence no other paper was being printed.

evidently written to appeal to people living in rural sections. See, for illustration, notices of plantations for sale in the following papers: *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 22 September and 29 December, 1773, 1 September, 1775; James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 29 August, 12 September, 28 November, and 12 December, 1777, 3 April, 1778; *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 15 August, 1787.

¹⁴ *The Cape Fear Mercury* contains such advertisements for Cross Creek (23 September, 1773, and 11 May, 1774); James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* for Hillsborough (9 January, 1778), Beaufort (6 March, 4 and 11 September, 1778), and Edenton (3 April, 1778); *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* for Warrenton (8 September, 1788), Murfreesborough (4 December, 1788), Windsor (22 January, 2 April, 1789), and Tarborough (1 October, 1789).

¹⁵ 19 December, 1787.

¹⁶ *Greenville* was later shortened to *Greenville*; *Tarborough* to *Tarboro*.

¹⁷ In November, 1772, Adam Boyd was promoting the circulation of *The Cape Fear Mercury* in Granville, Guilford and Chatham counties. *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. IX, p. 356.

A newspaper brought financial returns to its owner mainly through subscriptions and advertisements. As to the cost of subscriptions it is impossible to obtain information in most cases. Before the Revolution the standard price of *The Cape Fear Mercury* and of James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* was 16 shillings proclamation money per year. Publication of the first did not continue long after the revolt against Great Britain had begun, and whether or not its price was raised during that short time is not known. The second, however, continued to exist for several years, and the printer found it necessary to announce to his subscribers, 3 April, 1778, that "the great rise in every article of life, or rather fall of our money, puts it out of our power to serve them any longer on the same terms: the price of this gazette is therefore raised to thirty shillings per annum. . . ." Of those papers which came into existence after the cessation of hostilities and before 1790, only two quoted prices.¹⁸ The first of these, *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, cost 25 shillings a year; the second, *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*, 40 shillings, a price apparently not justified by any exceptionally high quality which the paper possessed.

The charge for printing advertisements varied. James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* before 1775 usually contained a statement to the effect that "Advertisements of a moderate Length, are inserted for *Three Shillings* the first Week, and *Two Shillings* for every Week after."¹⁹ *The Cape Fear Mercury* before 18 May, 1774, gave notice that "ADVERTISEMENTS of a moderate Length will be inserted at 4s Entrance, and 1s. a week Continuance: Those of an immoderate Length to pay in Proportion." Of those papers which were published after 1782, Thomas Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* charged five shillings for the first week, and three for each week thereafter; *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* eight and four

¹⁸ It is possible that more than two papers quoted prices; but those copies which have been preserved do not indicate that this was the case.

¹⁹ The wording of this statement was sometimes changed, but the price remained the same.

shillings respectively; and *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser* the same amount.

There were two other sources of income from newspapers, at least for some printers: (1) government subsidies and (2) money charged for printing the contributions of certain writers. Adam Boyd, in 1775, was paid a small amount by the Wilmington Committee of Safety in order to encourage the publication of his journal.²⁰ Whether any other printer was paid by the public for such service cannot be ascertained. The only evidence as to receipts from the second source is a notice in *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*:²¹ "A piece under the signature of *Honestius* has reached us. The author should he wish to have it inserted must make himself known, and pay a fee." To what extent such fees were demanded by other publishers is unknown. It is probable, however, that most papers made no such charge. Thomas Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*²² took pains to inform the public that "Articles of Intelligence and Essays will be gratefully received;" and the chances are that the majority of the other journals were glad to obtain anything with which to fill their columns.

In paying for their newspapers, as in settling many of their other bills, it seems that a large number of North Carolinians were extremely tardy. It was customary to sell papers to subscribers on credit or on part credit²³—with the result that the printers seem to have lost heavily. James Davis, in his *Gazette* for 20 June, 1775, stated that "All persons in Arrear for this Paper, are requested to make payment;" and again, 3 April, 1778, "our customers are requested to make payment for the last half year. . . . Our old customers long in arrear are once more called upon to make payment." A Fayetteville paper was forced in 1791 to go out of business because of "The great expense of carrying on the same" and "the extreme want of punctuality in so large a number of their subscribers."²⁴

²⁰ *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. IX, p. 1111-1119.

²¹ 15 August, 1787.

²² 16 February, 1786.

²³ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 3 April, 1778.

²⁴ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, p. 45, note. For evidence that still another paper had difficulty in collecting money from subscribers, see *The State Gazette of North Carolina*, 3 September, 1789.

Did it pay to publish a newspaper in this early period of North Carolina history? It must have done so since so many different sheets were printed, some of which were continued for several years, but the business could hardly have been very lucrative. Subscribers were few. The papers were weeklies, and thus the price of subscriptions was not high enough to yield large profits. There was difficulty in collecting money which was due, and so most of the printers were forced to supplement their incomes by other activities. James Davis served as printer to the government, published books and sold them to the public, printed paper currency, contracted to carry the mails, was postmaster at New Bern, and probably supervised the cultivation of one or more tracts of land which he owned. Andrew Steuart was printer to the government. Adam Boyd sold "sundry Pamphlets and Blanks; Also: Epsom and Glauber Salts by the lb. or larger quantity"; and seems besides to have received financial aid from the Wilmington Committee of Safety. And so it was with most, perhaps all, of the others.²⁵ That the business could not have paid very well is further indicated by the fact that no paper was able, as were several in other parts of America, to continue uninterrupted publication for several decades. The same factors which in the beginning had made the province tardy in securing newspapers, worked to limit the income of those which were established later.

²⁵ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, *passim*.

IV

THE NEWS

Most of the news which was printed came from a distance. A paper usually contained several items from Europe and from the English settlements in America,¹ but carried little or no local news. It was customary to emphasize foreign events by placing them in the most conspicuous location, while local items were apparently considered least important and were therefore placed after all other news. The reader had to wander over Europe and a large part of America before finally arriving at home. Except very rarely there were no headlines to indicate what a column contained² and usually no emphasis was given to matters of special interest. The news of the epoch-making battle of Lexington, for instance, was printed on the third page of a New Bern paper without anything to indicate its importance.³

Nearly all the news from a distance seems to have been extracted from papers which were brought into North Carolina by the post or, especially before the Revolution, by the numerous ships which sailed into her harbors.⁴ It was customary for

¹ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 16 July, 1789, contained despatches from The Hague, Stockholm, Warsaw, Paris, London, Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Newbern. The average paper, however, did not include items from so many different cities.

² Sometimes, however, there were printed in large type the word *London* or *Paris* or *Boston*, and the date of the despatch, showing the source and date of the news. One paper, *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*, used the headlines *Foreign Intelligence* and *Domestic Intelligence*.

³ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 5 May, 1775.

⁴ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 15 November, 1751, contained items copied from the *Westminster Journal* of 27 July, and from *The Old Woman's Magazine* of 16 July. The same paper, 15 April, 1757, printed an article from the *British Journal*. Andrew Steuart, in his *North Carolina Gazette*, 12 February, 1766, said that he presumed certain extracts from English papers, printed below, would not be unacceptable to his readers; and the same printer, two weeks later, quoted from a Newbern paper of 14 January (probably *The North Carolina Magazine*; or, *Universal Intelligencer*). *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 26 February, 1789, included a paragraph "extracted from the Bahama Gazette, printed at Nassau, New Providence, the 3d ult." *The Edenton Intelligencer*, 4 June, 1788, copied from a Norfolk paper. Usually the source was not given; but it is almost certain that nearly all the news from a distance was extracted from newspapers which had been brought into North Carolina.

American editors to copy almost anything they could lay their hands on. The printers of North Carolina, according to the practice of the time, must have subscribed to a number of journals; and they must have paid the captains of ships sailing to Europe and up and down the coast to bring back with them a collection of the latest news-sheets.⁵ Sometimes, when the post had been irregular and when no ships had arrived for several weeks, they were at a loss as to what to include in their papers.⁶ Upon such occasions they were forced either to delay publication, or else to resort to padding. The winter months were those in which there was the greatest difficulty of communication, and thus the greatest paucity of news; but North Carolina printers did not encounter in this matter such obstacles as did those farther to the north.

Sometimes news from a distance was not copied from papers which had been brought into North Carolina, but was obtained from other sources. During the entire period before 1790 letters from correspondents were fairly often printed. James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, for instance, carried such items as an "Extract of a Letter from Edenton, to a Gentleman in Bath,"⁷ and an "Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Charlestown, to his Friend at Newbern."⁸ Statements of travelers and captains of ships were also used: "Newbern. . . . A large Snow has arrived at Occacock from France . . . the Master of which, and a Gentleman Passenger, report

⁵ Dependence of the printers upon the mail service is indicated by a statement in James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 30 November, 1778: "For the conveniency of inserting in this paper the earliest intelligence by the post, which arrives here on Saturday, it will, in the future, be published on Monday evening." Dependence upon the arrival of ships is illustrated by a paragraph in *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 9 April, 1789: "From papers received by the ship Polly and Nancy, Captain Warburton, lately arrived at this port from Liverpool (England) we have extracted the articles which follow. . . ."

⁶ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 3 April, 1778, contains the notice: "No mail from the Northward last week." On the other hand, there was sometimes available more news than could be included in one issue of a paper. For instance, in *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 30 August, 1789, is a statement that "On account of the extreme length of the talk with the Indians, proceedings of Congress, &c. &c. we are obliged to omit sundry articles of intelligence intended for this day's paper."

⁷ 11 July, 1777.

⁸ 1 August, 1777.

. . . ;"⁹ "Newbern. . . . Since our last, arrived here the ship Harmony-Hall, Captain Alderson, from France, who reports. . . ;"¹⁰ Such accounts were recognized as being of doubtful value and, except during the Revolution, were rarely relied upon. They were used chiefly during the years 1777 and 1778, when the post was irregular and when communication with the outside world was disorganized by the British ships which hovered off the coast.

In contrast to our modern news-gathering facilities, the methods of the eighteenth century were slow and cumbrous in the extreme. Even when news came direct it usually travelled very slowly; but often, instead of coming direct, it arrived only by the most circuitous routes. An item of intelligence from New England, for instance, reached North Carolina only after having gone first to France and then to the West Indies; and another piece of news, originating in Fayetteville, found its way to Edenton, ninety miles distant, by way of Richmond, and was printed in an Edenton paper more than two and a half months after the recorded event had taken place.¹¹ These are exceptional cases, but they show what often happened in the eighteenth century. On the other hand, news could sometimes travel much more rapidly than in the instances cited above. The newspapers mentioned, for example, a despatch which came in 1775 by "express" in twelve days from Connecticut, a ship which in 1777 brought news in thirteen days from the West Indies, and another vessel which in 1788 had come from New York in nine days.¹² Communication between North Carolina

⁹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 17 October, 1777.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 25 September, 1778.

¹¹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 16 January, 1778, contains this interesting bit: "From the Antigua Gazette. To the Printer. Sir, The following is a copy of an American paper, arrived by the way of Nantz. . . ." *The State Gazette of North Carolina*, 5 February, 1789, prints what is probably copied from a Martinique paper, the "Extract of a letter from a French gentleman in Boston to his friend in Martinique." And the same sheet three weeks later includes what seems to be reprinted from a Richmond paper: "Richmond, January 14. Extract of a letter from Fayetteville (N. C.), December 6, 1788."

¹² "Newbern, May 5 (1775). Just received by Express, in twelve Days from Wallingford [near New Haven] in Connecticut. . . ." James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*. . . . "Newbern, November 28, 1777. By a Vessel in thirteen Days from the West Indies to our Bar, advices are received that. . . ." *Ibid.*, "Wil-

and the outside world could be fairly rapid, but usually news from a distance was so old by the time it was published that, at least according to modern notions, it was entirely out of date. During the decade prior to the Revolution, for instance, the Wilmington papers printed items as old as these: from Stockholm, 120 days; from Minsk, 117 days; from Cologne, 126 days; from London, 93 days; from Boston, 52 days; from Charleston, 21 days.¹³ During the years 1777 and 1778, in spite of the fact that means of communication were disorganized, items printed in James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* were not quite so old as these, and after 1783 there was still greater improvement. A study of certain numbers of *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* for 1788 and 1789 gives the following results:

AGE (IN DAYS) OF ITEMS OF NEWS PRINTED IN *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* FOR 1788 AND 1789

Point of origin	Smallest number of days	Largest number of days	Average	Number of instances
Warsaw	106	115	111	2
Paris	90	111	103	3
London	68	125	85	14
Boston	36	44	40	3
New York	13	27	23	10
Philadelphia	14	31	23	15
Baltimore	13	38	23	11
Richmond	11	25	19	7
Petersburg	7	14	11	2
Norfolk	13	13	13	1
Savannah	35	77	56	2
Charleston	24	37	31	2
Wilmington	21	21	21	1
New Bern	14	14	14	3

Probably in most cases the age of these items can be taken as the approximate length of time required for news from those cities to reach North Carolina. Sometimes when more news was at hand than could be printed in one issue of a paper, the

Wilmington [June 18, 1788]. On Sunday last arrived in this port, the schooner General Washington, Capt. William Meads, after a passage of 9 days from New-York." *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*.

¹³ Average for several items.

publisher seems to have held some of it to be included in later issues; but this practice was apparently not followed to any great extent.

The fact that news was weeks or months old did not keep people from reading it with interest. No matter what the age, it was fresh to them. Whether they would have preferred more local news and more articles of a literary nature to the great preponderance of foreign items which appeared in such papers as James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, it is difficult to say. The average American news-sheet of the period, particularly during the years before 1775, gave very little space to local events. Since Americans were vitally concerned in the wars and alliances and treaties of Europe, they naturally took an interest in European news. Thus it may be argued that the printers gave their subscribers merely what they wanted. On the other hand, it is true that several of the early American papers, such as *The New-England Courant* of James Franklin, *The New-York Weekly Journal* of John Peter Zenger, and *The Massachusetts Spy* of Isaiah Thomas, followed the policy of filling their sheets largely with matter other than stale foreign despatches; and there can be no doubt that some of the papers of this type were both widely read and profitable to the publishers. Thus it is quite possible that some of the printers of North Carolina, and many elsewhere in America, might have given their papers a greater appeal had they omitted some of the foreign matter and included material of a different nature, particularly local news. They perhaps printed such a preponderance of foreign news, not because their readers wanted it, but because it was much easier to copy imported newspapers than to take the trouble of writing reports of local events or of composing articles for the amusement of readers.

Local events, such as fires, deaths, storms, marriages, goods exported, prices, and ships entering and clearing, were reported with great brevity. For example: "NEWBERN. OCTOBER 24 (1777). . . . On Tuesday last was married. Mr. James Green, Jun. of this County, to Miss Peggy Cogdell, second daughter of Colonel Richard Cogdell, of this Town; a most

amiable and agreeable young Lady, with a considerable Share of Beauty and other Accomplishments.”¹⁴ Such an item is of much greater interest to the present-day student than are the foreign despatches; it is to be regretted that the papers did not include more of them.¹⁵

Sometimes a paper included news from the country districts or from towns other than the one in which the sheet was printed. During the decade following 1765 a great deal was published in regard to the proceedings of the committees of safety in various counties; and scattered through the papers of the period were occasional paragraphs about crimes, the condition of the crops, and other miscellaneous matters relating to North Carolina. For example: “The late severe frosts in the back country, we hear, has done great damage, particularly to the tobacco. . . . Some whole fields of late tobacco are entirely destroyed . . . it has likewise done great injury to the late corn.”¹⁶ During the years 1777 and 1778 James Davis’s *North Carolina Gazette* contained a number of items illustrating the activity of English ships off the coast. For instance:¹⁷ “The cruizers are yet very troublesome on our coast, having lately cut several vessels and small craft out of Roanoke and Currituck inlets. Besides Capt. Goodrick, there is Capt. McLean, a little Scotchman, well known here, cruising off our inlets; he has taken several of our vessels, and thus, exultingly, with Scotch gratitude, returns the many and singular favours and polite treatment he lately received here.”

The political news of North Carolina was given a fairly large amount of space. Before the Revolution the papers sometimes printed the proceedings of assembly and council, addresses of the governor to the two houses, or petitions to the king. During and after the struggle with Great Britain they published the laws which recently had been passed, extracts

¹⁴ James Davis’s *North Carolina Gazette*, 24 October, 1777.

¹⁵ A few issues of papers contained quite a little local news. For instance, Andrew Steuart’s *North Carolina Gazette*, 12 and 26 February, 1766, was largely filled with accounts of the actions taken in and around Wilmington to oppose the enforcement of the Stamp Act.

¹⁶ *Fayetteville Gazette*, 12 October, 1789.

¹⁷ 17 July, 1778.

from the journals of legislative bodies, or reports of legislative committees. Such items were usually mere copies of documents and were not presented in such a way as to appeal to readers. Only very rarely did the editors venture any comment.

The printers, then, were greatly handicapped in supplying the news by poor facilities of communication. They were often unable to obtain full accounts of what was going on outside a small section of North Carolina; and those accounts which they did obtain were frequently four or five months old. Thus it was impossible for them to keep their readers up to date as to what was happening in the world. An opportunity which they perhaps neglected, however, was that of publishing more local news. Had they done this they might have made their papers more readable and have increased their circulation. Certainly they would have made them more interesting and valuable to the student of today.

V

LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Sometimes the printers had no difficulty in obtaining enough news to fill all the space at their disposal, but often they were forced to turn to any kind of material upon which they could lay their hands. At times they received contributions from readers, but more often they had to copy selections from books, magazines or other newspapers. Some of these, such as "An Account of the Life, Religion, and Polity of Mohammed, as it is contained in the Koran"¹ must have been very tiresome. Others, such as "Hints for Young Married Women,"² were perhaps both instructive and entertaining. Interesting likewise must have been the satires upon the intricacies of etiquette such as: "Maxims for the Conduct of Young Gentlemen. . . . When in company with gentlemen, your superiors in age, education, and experience, be sure to engross the conversation, forcing attention to your observations by the vociferation with which they are uttered, and the violence of your gesture, if not by their importance. Speak out plumply and with decision, on subjects which have puzzled the ablest philosophers and metaphysicians; and descant largely on the politics, commerce and state of your country, whether possessed of information on these points, or not. . . ." ³

A number of anecdotes were published, many of them so vulgar that they would not be allowed to appear in a respectable newspaper today.⁴ Others were not inelegant, but were merely funny. For instance: "A Gentleman riding one morning very early in a place where he happened not to be acquainted, coming up by the side of a young woman who was carrying a pig in her arms, and hearing it squeal violently, addressed her thus, *Why my dear, your child cries amazingly!* The young woman

¹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 24 June, 1768.

² *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*, 18 June, 1788.

³ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 5 February, 1789.

⁴ See, for example, *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 25 June, 1789, for a prurient story about a French woman.

readily turned round, and looking him in the face, said, with a smile upon her countenance, *I know it Sir! it always does when it sees his Daddy.*"⁵ Stories of the kind seem always to have been copied; probably they were never original.

The papers also printed letters to the editors and contributions of native verse. The letters usually made no claim to literary excellency, but were written for some practical purpose. People often aired their views pretty thoroughly in the newspapers, sometimes using the most violent invective against each other. Complaints as to business conditions;⁶ comments on the colonial courts of oyer and terminer;⁷ replies to attacks made by critics;⁸ a discussion of duelling;⁹ a statement of the views of a candidate for office on the eve of an election¹⁰—such were the contents of these letters. During the years 1788 and 1789, when the state was considering the advisability of adopting the new federal constitution, the papers were full of political contributions, one of the most illuminating being a series of articles by "Aratus" in *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*. These articles succeeded in stirring up the bitterest kind of opposition among a number of readers of the paper. On May 28, 1789, for instance, there was this: "Gates, May 16, 1789. Mess. Printers, . . . Should the *learned Aratus* think himself roughly treated, let him comfort himself with another parade of his erudition; but let him beware of wantonly turning up his *posteriors* again, for should they not be so *lean* as to excite compassion, they will probably meet with some attention from Flagellator Scurrarum." To which, and to another similar letter, "Aratus" replied, 2 July: "As two 'Jackanapes' have attacked Aratus, he begs leave to inform them for fear of mistake, that he may be personally heard of by applying to the

⁵ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 26 February, 1789. For other anecdotes, see James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 13 March, 1752; Thomas Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 16 February, 1786; and *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 19 February, 1789.

⁶ Andrew Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette*, 12 February, 1766.

⁷ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 22 September, 1773.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11 August, 1775; *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 13 August, 1789.

⁹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 30 November, 1778.

¹⁰ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 13 August, 1789.

Printers.”¹¹ Other controversies were not so bitter as this, but there were many which could be called anything but friendly.

At one time or another during its existence nearly every one of these early papers contained, on page three or four, a “Poet’s Corner.” Although occasionally a native contribution appeared, most of the verse was copied and may be passed over with a word. A few of the poems of Philip Freneau and Peter Pindar were printed;¹² but usually such verse was composed by obscure writers and was of little merit. The native contributions, while perhaps worthless as literature, are nevertheless interesting in that nothing else of the kind has been preserved for this period. So far as is known, no book of North Carolina poetry was published before 1790; and North Carolinians do not seem to have written verse for any magazine.¹³ This newspaper verse was mainly of a very practical kind, just as were the contributions of prose. One number of James Davis’s *North Carolina Gazette*,¹⁴ for instance, contained a few lines consoling a widow upon the loss of her husband. Sometimes controversies in verse were waged, each writer belaboring the other with the most insulting epithets. In *The Edenton Intelligencer* for 9 April, 1788, appeared lines worth reproducing in part:

Did’st thou not know, thou idiot most ill bred,
A *writer*—first of all, should have a head,
Well stor’d with brains, and with ideas full,
And not like thine, an almost vacant skull? . . .
Hie thee for shame! go with thy fellow brutes,
Crop the green herbage or regale on roots,
And never more—no never dare again,
To visit social life—or mix with men.

Occasionally scandal formed the theme of such controversies.¹⁵

Contributions of verse were not always gratefully received by editors. Francis Xavier Martin informed one writer that

¹¹ The letters of “Aratus” and the replies which they brought forth are printed in full in Appendix B.

¹² See, for example, *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 1789, *passim*.

¹³ The writer has not examined the files of *The North Carolina Magazine*; or, *Universal Intelligencer*.

¹⁴ 24 March, 1775.

¹⁵ This, for instance, was the case with the verses printed in the *Fayetteville Gazette*, 14 September, 1789.

"The lines, signed 'A Reporter,' which were sent to us on Monday morning, we then being absent, do not appear worthy of a place in this paper. The author will perhaps exclaim, H—g this F—chman.¹⁶ *I wonder who made him a judge of English poetry.* We know but one rule of English poetry, to wit, *That in a poem there should be sense.* It is the only touchstone by which we try the literary favours of our correspondents."¹⁷ At least one other printer of the period made a similar statement.¹⁸

Perhaps the most enterprising attempt made by any newspaper in North Carolina during this early period to amuse its readers was that of *The Cape Fear Mercury*, which, during the fall of 1770, published a literary supplement. Five numbers of this supplement, which probably form a complete whole, have been preserved,¹⁹ the first printed 13 October, the last apparently 24 November. Each number consists of one sheet printed on both sides, the size being approximately eleven inches in length by seven in breadth. The supplements are almost entirely filled with five serial articles, entitled "some adventures which the Writer met with at an Inn where he stopped in a journey made Northerly," written by "Jack Careless." Imitating the style of Addison in rather clumsy fashion, they tell about what seems to have been a fictitious visit to an inn. A tenuous thread of narrative runs throughout all of them; and there are certain passages which are entertaining. But most parts are extremely dull, the theme is very poorly developed and, without the strictest attention, it is impossible to understand what the writer means.

The articles in the supplement are meant to appear to be of native origin. It is stated that they were contained in "a packet which was left at the Printing Office"; and in the first number the writer tells of reading an earlier issue of *The Cape Fear*

¹⁶ Martin had emigrated from France to America about the time of the beginning revolt against Great Britain. Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁷ *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 11 July, 1787.

¹⁸ See the *Fayetteville Gazette*, 21 September, 1789.

¹⁹ These numbers of the supplement of *The Cape Fear Mercury* are in the *Cobb Loan* in the library of the University of North Carolina. The North Carolina Historical Commission possesses neither original nor photostat copies of them.

Mercury. Upon a careful study, however, it becomes evident that the editor is merely using a ruse to deceive his readers, and that he has really copied the articles with a few changes from some English paper. The point of view taken is that of an Englishman; certain terms used show an intimate knowledge of English court life; and the purpose seems to be to appeal to English readers. Moreover the style, while laborious, is nevertheless more polished than that of any contribution by a native to a North Carolina newspaper. All things considered, it is hardly probable that the articles were written in the colony. Some of the American news-sheets, such as *The Virginia Gazette* and *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, did contain original literary productions of a high quality; but the North Carolina papers did not.

VI

EDITORIAL COMMENT

These early North Carolina papers contained no formal editorials. For the most part the editors, unlike some other American editors of the period, restricted themselves to publishing the news without comment. Hence it is sometimes difficult to ascertain what their attitude was in regard to public issues. Only by a careful study of the type of material they printed and of the few remarks they made can any notion as to their position be gained.

James Davis, publisher of *The North Carolina Gazette*, seems to have been quite tactful and politic. During the colonial period, when he was printer to the government and thus naturally anxious not to offend either governor or assembly, he contented himself with merely publishing the news and refrained from expressing his own views in print one way or the other. When the Revolution came on, however, he took the side of the colonies, and here and there in his paper included items which showed his sentiments. In 1777, commenting upon the departure from the state of a shipload of loyalists, he declared that they "chuse to risk every Consequence rather than acknowledge the Freedom of a Country which has been so remarkably propitious to the People of their Nation";¹ and in the spring of 1778 he urged "the necessity of keeping some force on Occacock island, otherwise our trade will be annihilated."² Never, however, does he seem to have used forceful language or strong arguments in the few opinions which he expressed.

Very different was Andrew Steuart, who was courageous enough, or perhaps foolhardy enough, to say just what he thought. A firm believer in the freedom of the press, he did

¹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 25 July, 1777.

² *Ibid.*, 10 April, 1778. Upon another occasion (25 September, 1777) he expressed his regret at the drowning of Richard Blackledge, who had been carrying on the public salt works of the state. A month later (31 October, 1777) he wrote a brief article consoling the widow of General Nash, an officer who had been killed in the battle of Germantown, upon the loss of her husband.

not see why he should be restrained in his criticism. His paper for 12 February, 1766, contained an article which was more like an editorial than anything else appearing in a North Carolina news-sheet before 1790:

The Printer hereof cannot help observing to the Publick, that he is at present in a very disagreeable Situation. At the earnest Desire, or rather stern Command of the People, he has endeavoured, with great Difficulty, to carry on a News Paper, well knowing that that Province that is deprived of the Liberty of the Press, is deprived of one of the darling Privileges which they, as Englishmen, boast of. . . . The Consequence has been, that, for publishing a Letter from a Gentleman at Tarborough, (who no doubt tho't that he was as much entitled to the Liberty of the Press, and making his Sentiments thereby known to the Public, as any other Man) he has been Threatened with a Horse-Whipping: . . . and doubtless he would have run some Hazard, had he refus'd inserting that very letter What Part is he now to act? . . . Continue to keep his Press open and free and be in Danger of Corporal Punishment, or block it up, and run the risque of having his Brains knocked out? Sad Alternative. . . . One Thing he has long ago resolved on, viz. That as he looks upon himself to be a freeborn Subject, no Man shall ever Horse whip him, if it is in his Power to prevent it; and when ever any such Threats are made toward him, he'll take Care to be on his Guard.

This statement and others of Steuart are mild when compared with the bitter attacks made on individuals and on the colonial governments in such papers as *The New-York Weekly Journal* of John Peter Zenger and *The Massachusetts Spy* of Isaiah Thomas. They are, however, more forceful than any other expression of editorial opinion in North Carolina before 1790. It was because of his radical policy that Steuart lost the support of many subscribers and was finally forced to discontinue the publication of his journal.

Adam Boyd was neither as outspoken as Steuart, nor as cautious as Davis. His policy, however, was more similar to that of the latter than to that of the former. Before 1775 he was careful not to go too far, although the type of news he printed showed clearly that he did not entirely approve of the

policy of the British government. Even after the Revolution had begun he did not express his own ideas in regard to the great issues at stake, but he did copy for his paper a number of articles which strove to justify the colonies in their revolt.

Thomas Davis was more outspoken than his father. In his paper, *The North Carolina Gazette*, which he was publishing at Hillsboro in 1786, he expressed his opinions quite openly. The one copy preserved contains two paragraphs in the nature of editorials, one criticizing the legislature on account of its paper money policy, the other commenting on the acts recently passed which had confiscated the property of Loyalists.

Francis Xavier Martin, in his *North Carolina Gazette*, likewise expressed himself in brief editorial comments. He did not hesitate to inform a contributor that his verse was not fit to print;³ and in the summer of 1787 he frankly discussed the secrecy of the proceedings of the Federal Convention, then sitting in Philadelphia.⁴ Only three issues of his paper have been preserved. No doubt if others were in existence they would show that he published his views in regard to numerous other matters.

The State Gazette of North-Carolina, published at first by Hodge and Blanchard and later by Hodge and Wills, does not seem to have taken any very decided stand upon the issues of the day. Since it was printed during a period when there was great interest in problems of government, violent political controversies were waged in its columns;⁵ but the editors, although willing to include in their paper the ideas of others, were very cautious about expressing their own. Very rarely, however, they did commit themselves, as, for instance, when they printed a brief "Laus Deo" after the ratification of the federal constitution by the North Carolina convention of 1789,⁶ or when they mildly declared that it was an excellent thing that the academies of North Carolina were prospering.⁷

³ See above, pp. 33-34.

⁴ 11 July, 1787.

⁵ See above, pp. 32-33; see also Appendix B.

⁶ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 3 December, 1789.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 22 October, 1789.

Only two copies of *The Edenton Intelligencer* have been preserved, but they contain sufficient evidence to show that even as early as the spring and summer of 1788 Maurice Murphy, the editor, was in favor of North Carolina's entering the new union. Murphy does not seem to have expressed his own opinions, but he copied articles from other journals, the meaning of which could not be mistaken.

The one issue of *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser* which is available does not contain editorial comment of any kind. It does include, however, an article "To the people of the state of North Carolina," urging that the Hillsboro convention decline to adopt the federal constitution without amendments reserving to each state a number of rights, especially control over its own army, navy and mint. The article urges that the powers of the existing Congress be strengthened, rather than that the new constitution be ratified. It is signed "Honestius," and, although probably not written by one of the editors, indicates that the paper was anti-federalist in policy.

It is unfortunate that we have only four numbers of the *Fayetteville Gazette*. If we had more, we should probably be in a better position to gauge political sentiment in the state in 1789. While the editors, Sibley and Howard, apparently did not express their views in regard to political matters, their paper is very valuable in that it contains a number of articles discussing the advisability of North Carolina's ratifying the new constitution. A series of letters to the editors in regard to the establishment of a religion in America; an "Extract of a letter from a gentleman in New-York to his friend in this state, dated July 29, 1789," in favor of North Carolina's coming into the union; two contributions signed, "Another True Federalist. Hillsborough, August 20, 1789," opposing ratification of the constitution until certain amendments have been adopted—such articles are of great worth to the student.⁸

⁸ It is possible, although not probable, that some of these essays were written by the editors themselves, and that fictitious names were signed to them in order to deceive the public.

VII

ADVERTISEMENTS

1. Description of Advertisements

The publishers of North Carolina newspapers, in the period before 1790, had not learned a great deal about the art of advertising. They did, it is true, use various devices to catch the eye of the reader—very large lettering and italics and crude cuts representing houses or ships or runaway slaves. But their advertisements were usually very dull, mere announcements put together with little thought of appealing to popular fancy, more similar to modern English advertisements than to those of the United States. In this respect North Carolina printers seem to have measured up to the average among their American contemporaries. They did not, however, compare favorably with a small number, such as Benjamin Franklin, who had learned to make such notices pithy and interesting. Moreover, they were not clever in placing their advertisements. Having failed to realize the value of sandwiching them between bits of news, they usually grouped them all together on pages three and four.¹

But, although not cleverly worded or well placed, the advertisements are valuable to the student. There is no other printed source which gives so many or so intimate details as to country life: the types of houses people lived in, the number of horses and cattle and pigs they owned, the crops they raised, and the number of slaves they possessed;² as to commerce: the number of ships that entered and cleared, the products they carried, where they went and whence they came, and how long it required for them to make their trips; as to towns: goods on dis-

¹ Although the advertisements usually appeared only on the last two pages, they might be found anywhere in a paper. The total space they occupied varied considerably, but was most often from one-sixth to one-third of the total.

² This paper does not discuss the subject of country life. While the advertisements are full of information in regard to the matter, they do not shed sufficient light for an adequate treatment. Furthermore, a comprehensive study of such a broad topic, even if it could be made from the newspapers alone, would require too much space for a paper of this type.

play at stores, houses for sale, plays and schools; as to printing, labor conditions, stealing, the value of money, the kinds of clothes worn—in fact, as to almost every phase of the life of the people. An exhaustive study of these advertisements, together with the other sources which are available, should lead to interesting conclusions. The remarks which follow do not represent such an exhaustive study; they are intended to be suggestive rather than final.³

2. Trade and Commerce

The advertisements are full of information in regard to the trade and commerce of North Carolina. They indicate that during the quarter of a century before the Revolution her inhabitants, abiding by the provisions of the Navigation Acts, traded little or none outside the limits of the British Empire.⁴ With the mother country, with the British West Indies, and with the other continental colonies there was an extensive business. Even at this time the lack of an adequate harbor was a serious handicap to commerce, but the ships used were so small that it was possible for them, in spite of the inconvenience and danger, to pass through the narrow and shifting channels which led past the bar into the sounds of eastern North Carolina, or to steer their way some distance up the Cape Fear, usually as far as Wilmington.

There are a few notices which indicate what types of goods were exported from North Carolina. In May, 1778, for example, there was offered for sale "the Caswell, burthen 90 tons, . . . now lying at Bogue inlet ready for sea with the following cargo on board, viz. 68 barrels tar, 114 do. pitch, 148 do. turpentine, 7 do. spirit turpentine, 3 do. of vernish, 4800 white oak hogshead staves, 25000 lb. tobacco, 8 barrels pork, and 1000 lb. biscuit. . . ."⁵

³ The writer hopes before long to complete an investigation of economic and social conditions in North Carolina, 1763-1789.

⁴ It may be, however, that some clandestine trade was carried on which the papers did not tell about. A man engaged in violating the Navigation Acts would hardly have desired to advertise his business.

⁵ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 15 May, 1778.

In regard to the types of goods which were imported, however, the advertisements are much more explicit. Before 1775 a number of stores in the colony kept a miscellaneous assortment of goods imported direct from the British Isles: "Just imported in the Snow Mary, Captain Corrie, from Leith: and the Ship Caesar, Captain Hume, from Glasgow; and to be sold by William Watkins, At his Store in Wilmington: Very good oznabrigs at 1s. & 6d. per yard. a compleat assortment of checks. striped linens. . . . threads of all sorts. pistol lawns, plain and flower'd lawns. plain figur'd and striped gauze. gauze aprons handkerchiefs and ruffles. . . . sattin hats, cloaks and bonnets. sattin and calamancoe shoes. men's neat shoes and pumps. coarse shoes. . . . An assortment of very handsome paper hangings. one set of mape. choice hyson green and bohea teas. a few coils of cordage. . . . iron pots. frying pans and skillets. 20d. nails. an assortment hair cauls. ribbons &c. for perukemakers. . . . Rum. sugar. molasses. and various other goods before imported."⁶ For the most part such goods consisted of articles manufactured in England or Scotland, but there were also commodities from other sources which came by way of Great Britain or Ireland: rum, sugar and molasses from the West Indies;⁷ tea, spices, and medicines from China, India and the East Indies; wine from France or the Iberian Peninsula, silks from France, and fine textiles from the Netherlands.⁸

During the Revolution direct communication with Great Britain was cut off, and the people of North Carolina found it necessary to establish new trade contacts. Advertisements appearing in James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* for the years 1777 and 1778 show that large quantities of goods were imported from France, and smaller quantities from Spain and the French West Indies. For instance: "Newbern, Feb. 20 [1778]. Just arrived from Nantz, the Schooner Inconstant,

⁶ Andrew Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette*, 12 February, 1766.

⁷ These products were brought into the colony also direct from the British West Indies.

⁸ Tobacco seems never to have been imported, since a supply more than adequate was produced in the colony.

Capt. Vance, commander, who has imported the following cargo, which he will sell, for cash or produce: . . .” Although most of the goods which came from regions outside the British Empire were similar to those which had been imported from the British Isles before 1775, there were a number of products which had not been brought in extensively before: articles of finery and luxury such as “gold epaulets, ostrich’s feathers and sashes for officers, sword belts. . . , gilt and horn buttons, paper snuff boxes, looking glasses, combs of different kinds. . . , scented waters. . . , hair powder in pounds;” a most tempting collection of beverages: “French brandy in hogsheads, claret in bottles, Frontenac, Malaga and Mucadel wines &c. French liquors of different kinds;” articles of food which would appeal to the connoisseur: “raisins in small boxes, currants in casks, linseed and olive oil in casks, fine, Florence oil in cases of 12 bottles, anchoivies in ditto, olives in ditto, capers in ditto, truffles in ditto, olives with anchoivies and capers, fruit preserved in brandy;” and a miscellany of commodities which were fancy and unusual, but which were hardly to be desired when even the necessities of life were scarce.⁹ Imports before 1775 had been largely of a different nature, articles which were useful rather than luxuries which appealed to the eye or to the palate.

During the years 1777 and 1778 there was in the state a scarcity of certain kinds of provisions. A proclamation of the governor, September, 1777, prohibited the exportation of salt for thirty days.^{9a} In February, 1778, it was ordered that no beef, pork, bacon or salt be sent out of the state for thirty days in order that there might be for the armies as large quantities of these commodities as possible.^{9b} A little later the ban was extended to include corn, peas and flour.^{9c} And in September of the same year it was necessary to command that on account of the scarcity of provisions in the state, no beef, pork, bacon,

⁹ James Davis’s *North Carolina Gazette*, 7 August, 1778. These goods were offered for sale by Savage and Westmore at Edenton. They were typical of a large part of the imports of the state at the time.

^{9a} *Ibid.*, 5 September, 1777.

^{9b} *Ibid.*, 6 February, 1778.

^{9c} *Ibid.*, 20 February, 1778.

flour, wheat, Indian corn, rice, peas, or any other kind of provision be exported for thirty days.^{9d} When those articles necessary for a bare existence were so much needed, it must have seemed absurd that ships from France were bringing such articles as hair powder, scented waters and truffles.

In the years immediately following the Revolution the state established wider commercial connections than ever before. She traded with the British Isles, with France, with both British and French West Indies, and up and down the coast. But although the ships trading with her visited more foreign ports than formerly, they for the most part came to ply again the routes which they had sailed before 1775.

Imported goods were often disposed of at public sale. "Newbern, April 17 [1778]. Capt. Caillaud, late commander of the ship St. Germain from Cape Francois, lately stranded at Occacock bar, intends to sell at public vendue, the 28th inst. at Mr. Singleton's wharf, the articles saved from the wreck. . . ." ¹⁰ Goods thus disposed of went to the highest bidder, usually a merchant. Sometimes such auctions took place on board ship.

Goods which had been imported usually found their way to stores, some of which must have been well known in their own sections. John Burgwyn at Wilmington, Edward Batchelor & Co. at Union Point [near New Bern], and Lory Brothers at New Bern seem to have had unusually wide reputations for that day. Sometimes a firm operated stores in two or more towns. There was, for instance, a co-partnership between Sutherland and Cruden at Wilmington and John Cruden & Co. at Cross Creek;¹¹ and Scott, Irwin and Couper had stores at Tarboro, Martinboro and Washington.¹² Nearly all these shops carried, as does the cross-roads store today, the most miscellaneous assortment of commodities: shoes and olives, table linen and brimstone, frying pans and ribbons—almost anything, in

^{9d} *Ibid.*, 11 September, 1778. The proclamation provided that exception might be made in certain cases.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 24 April, 1778.

¹¹ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 11 May, 1774.

¹² James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 23 January, 1778.

fact, which could be sold for a profit. Very rare was the store which dealt only in a specialized kind of goods.¹³

Usually merchants bought their wares outright. That they did not always do so, however, is indicated by the advertisement of A. H. Adams, who "respectfully informs the Gentlemen of Newbern, and the public, that he has opened a Commission store in Pollock-street, where all kinds of English and West-India goods are thankfully received, and sold on the lowest commissions. If required, good security will be given to the amount of the goods."¹⁴ While there seem to have been no stores which did an exclusively wholesale business, a number disposed of their goods either wholesale or retail. It is probable that the majority if not all of them followed this policy.

Most of the merchants insisted upon immediate payment for goods, but, since ready money was scarce, they were often forced to accept substitutes—as is illustrated by such phrases as these: "Tar, turpentine or lumber will be taken in payment";¹⁵ "for cash or produce only";¹⁶ "for ready money or tobacco";¹⁷ "for cash or produce: no credit will be given, nor any goods delivered until paid for—*without any exception*."¹⁸ Some stores did allow credit but seem to have suffered materially from bad debts. That this was the case is indicated by such a statement as this: "[We] call on our good Friends, who are in Arrear to us, either by open Account, Bond, or Note, to make immediate Payment."¹⁹ North Carolinians were not noted for prompt settlement of their debts.

An extensive trade in medicines was carried on: "Doctor Ward wishes to thank the public for the kind reception given to his purging cake. . . . Ward's Anodyne Pearls 16 in a paper for only 1s and that to be returned to any buyer who shall say they have not answered the character here given. . . .

¹³ In 1788 John Cuyler was keeping in New Bern a "Medical Store opposite Mr. John Green's." *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 27 March, 1788.

¹⁴ *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 15 August, 1787.

¹⁵ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 22 September, 1773.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 13 January, 1773.

¹⁷ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 29 May, 1778.

¹⁸ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 4 October, 1787.

¹⁹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 12 May, 1775.

To preclude the attempts of imposture, by any imitation, Doctor Ward will sign his name with red ink, on every paper of printed directions that will be given along with them."²⁰ "To be Sold, . . . Stoughton's excellent London Bitters, being a grand Preventative against the Ague and Fever, and giving Strength and Digestion to the Stomach: Also some Cases of genuine Cordials."²¹ "For sale, . . . Dr. Stephany's incomparable gold tincture, also his infallible ague pills (sold by no other person in this state). . . ." ²² Most of the remedies disposed of would be considered helpful by the modern doctor, but some of them most assuredly would not.²³

3. *Manufacturing*

The advertisements indicate that before 1790 only a very small amount of manufacturing was carried on in North Carolina. Especially was this true during the colonial period, when the industrial revolution had not got under way, and when nowhere in the world had great manufacturing cities grown up. Even the type of manufacturing which was carried on under the domestic system was discouraged in America, since one of the cardinal points of the mercantilist policy of the British government required that the colonies should not compete with the mother country in the fabrication of goods, but should rather furnish her with raw materials and serve as markets for the products of her factories. In North Carolina the towns were of little consequence. In regard to the piedmont and mountain sections, the advertisements give little or no information, but they show that on the plantations in the east there were saw mills, grist mills, and kilns for the production of naval stores, and that many of the slaves and white servants were skilled as coopers, as blacksmiths, or as workers in some other form of

²⁰ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 29 December, 1773.

²¹ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 24 February, 1775.

²² *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 2 March, 1788.

²³ A very curious notice was the one which stated that "Any person that will dispose of their Front Teeth (slaves excepted) may receive Two Guineas for each, by calling on Doctor Laymeur. For further particulars enquire of the Printer." Thomas Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 16 February, 1786.

artisanry.²⁴ Most manufactured articles, however, were not produced in the colony, but were imported.

With the severing of commercial relations with Great Britain in 1775 the situation quickly changed and the demand for certain commodities which had formerly been imported stimulated industry in various ways. North Carolina found herself especially in need of three kinds of fabricated goods: paper, cloth and iron; and in order to meet this need attempts were made to produce all three. The first paper mill was established in 1777 near Hillsboro, the proprietors, in one of the few cleverly worded advertisements of the period, stating that they:

“ . . . request the Favour of the Public and more particularly the Mistresses of Families, and the Ladies in general, whose more peculiar Province it is, to save all their Rags and Scraps of Linen of all Sorts; old Thread Stockings, Thrums from their Linen Looms, and every Kind of Linen, is useful. As this undertaking is novel, saving Rags may perhaps be thought too trifling, and below the Notice of the good Matrons of this State; but when they consider they are aiding and assisting in a necessary Manufacture, and when the young Ladies are assured, that by sending to the Paper Mill an old Handkerchief, no longer fit to cover their snowy Breasts, there is a Possibility of its returning to them again in the more pleasing Form of a Billet Deaux from their Lovers, the Proprietors flatter themselves with great Success. . . . ”²⁵

The spinning of thread and weaving of cloth in the household were encouraged, and at least one fulling mill was put into operation;²⁶ and iron works were operated on Deep River in Chatham County.²⁷

All of these attempts at manufacturing proved abortive. While the war was going on, although there was a great demand for certain types of fabricated goods, the time for the

²⁴ The advertisements make no mention of the extensive manufacturing which was carried on in Wachovia by the Moravians.

²⁵ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 14 November, 1778.

²⁶ This was “in Pitt county, about ten miles above Red Banks.” *Ibid.*, 14 November, 1778.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 9 January, 1778. Iron works had been in operation in North Carolina as early as 1771. *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. VIII, p. 496. There was also a great shortage of salt during the Revolution, although the advertisements do not indicate that this was the case.

establishment of factories was not propitious, since the whole economic system of North Carolina was disorganized. With the return of peace, when trade had largely gone back to its old channels, it was probably easier and cheaper to import goods than to make them at home. Thus the advertisements between 1783 and 1790 contain very little about manufacturing. A new paper mill was erected at Salem in 1789; and notices were printed in the papers by shoemakers and locksmiths.²⁸ On the whole, however, the amount of manufacturing in the state was negligible.

Before 1775 the advertisements give evidence of no shipbuilding.²⁹ During and after the Revolution, however, they indicate that many ships were constructed. In the years 1777 and 1778 the scarcity of certain commodities and the lack of vessels made it essential that boats be built for trade with foreign countries. That they were built is indicated by a number of advertisements appearing in James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*. For example: "The subscriber has for sale at the town of Beaufort, Carteret county, a new vessels on the stocsts [stocks], well calculated for a fast sailer, and will be completely finished the 15th of May next. Her dimensions are 55 feet keel strait rabbet, 11 feet rake forward, 18 and a half feet beak, and 7 feet and a half hold."³⁰ After 1783 shipbuilding seems to have continued to be profitable, since such advertisements as the following show that a number of new vessels were constructed: "For sale and now ready to be launched, at Bogue, a New Vessel, built of live oak, and cedar, of the following dimensions 48 or 49 feet keel, 19 ditto beam, 7, 10 inch. or 8 feet hold,—with double bends. She will be sold cheap, for Cash, or part cash and the remainder in goods."³¹

4. Labor

The advertisements tell a great deal about labor conditions in North Carolina. The oldest copy of a newspaper which has

²⁸ Thomas Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 16 February, 1786, *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 2 July, 1789.

²⁹ Ships were built, although the newspapers do not show that this was the case.

³⁰ 15 May, 1778.

³¹ *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 15 August, 1787.

been preserved, James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* for 15 November, 1751, carries an advertisement that a reward will be paid for the return of a runaway slave, and such notices continue to appear in large numbers all during the period studied. One illustration will suffice: "Newbern, June 27, 1777. Run away from Green Spring, near Newbern, a Negro Fellow named Smart, very black, about 5 Feet 8 inches high, well made, and very likely, speaks broken English, but very artful and insinuating. He is supposed to be lurking about Slocomb's Creek, with a Fellow belonging to Mr. Almond, and a Gang of Runaways belonging to the late Mr. Clear's Estate. Whoever brings the said Slave to Green Springs aforesaid, shall have Five Dollars Reward. James Davis."³²

Notices were printed that slaves were for sale or for hire: "To be sold for cash or on short credit with approved security, Two likely, healthy, sensible negro fellows, who have been accustomed to plantation business, & are well acquainted with every branch of it."³³ "To be hired out by the Year or Month, several house servants. . . ."³⁴ Evidence that slaves were being imported from Africa and from the British West Indies is given by such notices as this: "Newbern, December 10, 1774. Just imported in the Schooner Hope, Thomas Foster, Master, from Africa, a Parcel of likely healthy Slaves, Consisting of Men, Women, and Children, which are to be sold for Cash, or Country Produce, by Edward Batchelor & Co. at their Store at Union Point."³⁵

The advertisements show that there were Welsh, Irish, Scotch and English indented servants in North Carolina before 1775, and that these servants, not to be outdone by the negroes, frequently ran away. Such persons were "Mary Kelly, lately from Ireland, but says she has lived 14 years in London,"³⁶ and "William Miller a Scotchman, a taylor by trade, about 5

³² James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 4 July, 1777. This advertisement continued to appear until May, 1778, the reward being raised to ten, and later to twenty, dollars. Apparently Smart was not recovered.

³³ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 29 December, 1773.

³⁴ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 6 June, 1778.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 24 February, 1775.

³⁶ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 22 September, 1773.

feet 1 inch high, wearing long black hair, darkish complexion, 24 years old, had on when he went away a brown coat, black sattin breeches."³⁷ Of the indented servant class, the men were usually workers skilled at some trade, the women most frequently household servants. While there were a few of them in North Carolina, they were not nearly so numerous as the slaves.

There were, besides these two groups, a few men who worked for wages. In the towns were journeymen printers, assistants to tailors or shoemakers, and clerks in stores; in the country districts were those who tended saw- or grist-mills, or who acted as overseers of plantations. Into the last class would fall the person who printed the following notice: "To the Landed Gentlemen. A Steady, sedate man, regularly bred to the farming Business, who understands the Management and Improvement of Farms, and every necessary Branch of Agriculture, would be willing to serve any Gentleman in undertaking the Management of his Farm, or the Improvement of his Lands, Arable or Pasture; he is thoroughly versed in the Method of grazing, the Nature of rearing Cattle, and breaking young Horses to their proper paces fit for the Saddle, having had sufficient experience in England. . . . N.B. He can write a legible Hand, and knows the Method of Bookkeeping."³⁸

5. Travel

The advertisements throw light upon conditions of travel and communication by land as well as by water. They indicate that before the Revolution, as early at least as 1766, the post was being carried over certain roads of the colony at regular, although infrequent, intervals. "The Wilmington Express sets off Thursday Morning early; and will continue to set off every other Thursday, for Charlestown in South-Carolina. . . . Letters, Messages, &c. must be left at the Printing-office before 8 o'clock Wednesday Evening."³⁹ Eight years later the post was being carried between Wilmington and Cross Creek, al-

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 29 December, 1773.

³⁸ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 24 February, 1775.

³⁹ Andrew Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette*, 26 February, 1766.

though only once in a fortnight.⁴⁰ As to conditions during the Revolution, the advertisements tell nothing. But they do show that after 1783 the mail service was better than it had ever been before. By the Continental Post mail was being carried in 1788 between New Bern and Wilmington, twice a week from 1 May to 1 November, and three times a week from 1 November to 1 May. During the same year the post seems to have gone west from New Bern once every two weeks.⁴¹

There were notices in regard to stage coaches—none before 1789, but a few in that year. The only stage route mentioned was that from Washington to Edenton and Suffolk. It will suffice to quote one of these notices: "This is to inform the public, that the Mail Stage will leave Captain Kocke's tavern in Edenton for Suffolk, on Mondays and Thursdays, and will return on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Those gentlemen that please to favour this undertaking with their patronage, will apply to Capt. Kocke in Edenton, and Mr. John Rayborn in Suffolk, who will receive their freights, and baggage committed to their charge will be duly entered on the stage bill, and forwarded agreeable to directions; and as the stage sets out by four o'clock in the morning, it is hoped that Gentlemen will send their baggage and enter the evening before, which will greatly oblige the public's most obedient humble servant, Richard Townes."⁴²

Along the roads and in various towns were inns at which the traveller might stop. "Robert Egan Informs his friends and the public in general, that he has removed from the house he lately occupied, to the noted tavern formerly kept by Captain Kock, where he proposes, as usual, to keep A House of Entertainment. . . . Horses and carriages to hire. . . . Edenton, December 20, 1748."⁴³ Although the advertisements mention such taverns as existing only in Fayetteville, New Bern and Edenton, they were kept in other towns and in the country districts.

⁴⁰ *The Cape Fear Mercury*, 11 May, 1774.

⁴¹ *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 19 December, 1787.

⁴² *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 18 June, 1789.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 25 December, 1788.

6. *Immigration and Emigration*

The advertisements give a few scattered, but very interesting, bits of information in regard to the movement of people into and out of North Carolina. That negro slaves were brought in from Africa and from the West Indies, and that indented servants came from Great Britain, has already been indicated. There are also other notices about immigration: "Newbern, December 24 [1778]. Hamilton Ballantine late of the island of Jamaica, attorney at law, acquaints the public that he purposes to reside in this State. . . ." ⁴⁴ "Betty Trippe and Daughter, Just from Philadelphia, Beg leave to inform the gentlemen and ladies in Newbern, that they have just opened Shop in Front-street, near the Palace, at the house of William Tooley, where they carry on the business of Tayloresses, Mantuemaking and Millinery, and seemstry of every kind." ⁴⁵ "John Frazel, Begs leave to inform the public that he has engaged with William Lowther, from London, Gunsmith and Locksmith, and proposes carrying on those businesses; together with his own of A Blacksmith." ⁴⁶ These and similar notices tell a great deal about the type of people entering the state.

Likewise something, although very little, is told about the great movement to the west and southwest which, beginning a few years before the Revolution, came by 1815 to be a great drain on the population of North Carolina and a serious obstacle to her economic development. In 1777 the state of Georgia advertised in James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette* ⁴⁷ that, in order to encourage settlers to come in, she would give "Five hundred Acres of Land for every Head of a Family, and Fifty acres for every white Person belonging to the same, and also Fifty Acres for each Negro, not exceeding ten in Number." A decade later, when a stream of emigrants was flowing steadily from North Carolina into Kentucky and Tennessee, a notice appeared in *The State Gazette of North-Carolina* ⁴⁸ that: "The

⁴⁴ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 9 January, 1778.

⁴⁵ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 7 February, 1788.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 July, 1789.

⁴⁷ 24 October.

⁴⁸ 18 December, 1788.

public are informed, that the New Road from Campbell's Station, at the lower end of Clinch Mountain, to Nashville, was opened on the 25th of September (as advertised) and the guard attended at that time to escort such persons as were there ready to proceed to Nashville: That about 60 families appeared and went on, among whom was the widow and family of the late Brigadier-General Davidson and Sumner. . . ."

7. Towns

Much information is given in regard to towns and town life. Of houses and lots for sale there are a number of notices, some of which give fairly comprehensive descriptions of the property to be disposed of: "Wilmington, January 15th, 1766. To Be Sold, or Let, The House and Lot now occupied by Robert Wales, a little below Mr. Purviance's Tar-House: The House is new and well built, 36 Feet by 24, not quite finished in the inside, fronting Front street, running down to the Water, where may be built a very commodious Wharf, with a very small Expence; the Lot is 66 Feet front. . . ."49 "On Wednesday the 3d of January will be sold at public vendue, at the dwelling-house of the deceased Mr. Timothy Clear, in Newbern, The Household Furniture belonging to said estate, consisting of mohogony chairs, tables, and bedsteads, &c. &c. fifteen hogsheads of West India and New England Rum, a quantity of Indigo, Molasses, loaf and brown Sugar, cotton and wool Cards."50 Notices of the kind were printed from Wilmington, New Bern, Edenton, Murfreesborough and Windsor.

Most of the towns were growing rapidly and offered a chance for profits from the sale of real estate. Lots were offered for sale in towns which were already established; and one man, James Campbell, was so impressed with the possibilities that he attempted to build up an entirely new community: "Notice. The Subscriber proposes to form a New Town, by the Name of Campbellsburgh; situate on the West side of Chowan River, between Thomas Cochran's and said Campbell's

⁴⁹ Andrew Steuart's *North Carolina Gazette*, 12 February, 1766.

⁵⁰ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 22 December, 1775.

on the place formerly called the Old Tar Landing, in Bertie County, North-Carolina. . . . There will be immediately laid off One Hundred Lots of Half-Acres each joining the River and continuing outwards from the River, with the Streets running North and South, East and West in Squares; the Price will be Five Pounds Paper Currency per Lot; there will be Fifty Acres laid off for a Common for said Town. . . ."⁵¹

Notices printed in the newspapers indicate that Edenton in 1789 possessed a government which was active in trying to better living conditions. In order to lessen the danger from fire, it was ordered that all chimneys which had been improperly built be altered.⁵² Measures were taken to restrict trading by negroes: "Public Notice. The inhabitants of the town of Edenton being determined, after the 5th of August next, to take up all negroes bringing or exposing anything for sale, or purchasing any kind of goods, or trafficking in any manner whatever, without a permission in writing (expressing the articles exposed for sale, and those wanted to purchase) from their master or mistress—hereby give notice that all those who transgress may depend on being prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law."⁵³ Complaints were made that the streets were crowded with negroes on Sunday afternoon; to which one of the commissioners replied that it was the duty of the magistrates rather than of the commissioners to attend to the matter.⁵⁴

No theatrical performance is referred to in the newspapers before 1788. About that time, however, groups of players began to visit the towns of the state. Wilmington and New Bern possessed theatres, while Edenton saw plays in her courthouse.⁵⁵ Examples of advertisements of the theatre are these: "Newbern, March 27, [1788]. This evening will be presented at the theatre in this town, Dr. Young's celebrated Trajedy called the Revenge. To which will be added a comic opera,

⁵¹ *The Edenton Intelligencer*, 9 April 1788.

⁵² *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 5 February, 1789.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 30 July, 1789.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 13 August, 1789.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3 November, 1788.

called the Poor Soldier.”⁵⁶ “On Monday evening, the 13th inst. [June, 1788] the Theatre in Newbern was opened by Mr. Kenna’s company of Comedians, with the trajedy of *Isabella*, or the *Fatal Marriage*. Mrs. Kenna, in the character of *Isabella*, gave the most universal satisfaction to a polite and genteel audience, many of whom in pearly drops testified that their hearts were sensibly touched with those tender feelings which her inimitable powers always must inspire. . . . The lovers of the Drama are informed, that it is expected Mr. Kenna’s company of comedians will, in the course of a few days, open the Theatre in this town.”⁵⁷

8. Education

A few of the schools which existed in North Carolina before 1790 are mentioned in the advertisements. In education New Bern seems to have been the leading town. It possessed a public schoolhouse which was rented out to persons desiring to teach; and between 1774 and 1788 no less than eight different men gave notice that they intended to give, or were actually giving, instruction.⁵⁸ For example: “Newbern, August 4, 1774. The Subscriber takes this Method to inform the Public, that he has just opened School in the public School-House of this Town, where he proposes to teach, at Sixteen Shillings per Quarter, Reading, Writing, Cyphering, Navigation, and Surveying; . . . and Algebra, Euclid’s Elements, Latin and Greek, at Eighteen Shillings. . . .”⁵⁹

In 1778, because of the fact that France was aiding the colonies in their struggle against Great Britain, there was great interest in all things French. In New Bern at least two men gave instruction in the French language. One of these was “Gasper Beaufort, from Philadelphia,” who advertised “that on Monday next he proposes opening a school in this town, at the house of Widow . . . [?] to teach the French tongue; to read, right [*sic*], and speak it grammatically. Gen-

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 27 March, 1788.

⁵⁷ *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*, 18 June, 1788.

⁵⁸ Not all of them taught in the public schoolhouse.

⁵⁹ James Davis’s *North Carolina Gazette*, 2 September, 1774.

tlemen and ladies that please to favour this undertaking may depend on his greatest care and assiduity. His price will be thirty shillings per month. He also proposes to attend any gentlemen or ladies at their own houses in the evening for the above purpose."⁶⁰ The project did not turn out as well as had been expected. The next week the would-be-teacher, whose feelings seem to have been hurt, gave notice that: "As Mr. Beaufort has attended at the house mentioned in his former advertisement, and has not met with such encouragement as he deserves, in teaching the French [*sic*], he intends to continue but one month if no better encouragement; he hopes such gentlemen and ladies that intend to be taught that useful and genteel language, will not neglect this opportunity, as he is wanted where he may have encouragement suitable to his merit."⁶¹ Beaufort probably did not meet with "encouragement suitable to his merit," for three months later another person, George Harrison, was advertising for pupils to be instructed in French.

There were notices⁶² of academies in Perquimans County, in Granville County, at Warrenton, and at the house of Rev. James MacDougal, "17 miles above the town of Halifax."⁶³ The advertisement of Warrenton Academy, appearing in the fall of 1788, is worth quoting: "The Trustees give notice, that on the 1st Monday of October next, the academy will be opened under the direction of a gentleman. . . . The price of tuition will be five pounds Virginia money, and of boarding and washing in genteel private houses, twenty-five pounds; or by gentlemen keeping public houses eighteen pounds, like money . . . the students to live in houses detached from the public houses, and in both cases to find their own lodging. The currency of the state will be taken at its real value. One half of the board and tuition must be advanced half yearly."

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 6 March, 1778.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 13 March, 1778.

⁶² None of these notices was printed before 1788.

⁶³ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 22 January, 1789; 24 December, 1789; 8 September, 1788; 1 October, 1789.

9. *Publication and Sale of Books*

Some of the newspaper publishers attempted to add to their incomes by the printing of books. Before 1783, although Andrew Steuart seems to have published a book or two,⁶⁴ nearly all the printed works came from the press of James Davis. The first which he turned out, and the first to make its appearance in North Carolina, was "A Collection of All the Public Acts of Assembly of the Province of North Carolina," published at New Bern in 1751⁶⁵. From that year until 1775, with one exception, no book from Davis's press was advertised in his paper.⁶⁶

When the Revolution began there was a larger demand for reading matter. During the year 1775 alone Davis published and advertised for sale no less than seven books and pamphlets. There was: "price eight coppers. . . . The first Book of the American Chronicle of the Times. . . . Specimen of the Work. Chap. I. 1. And behold! when the Tidings came to the great City that is afar off, the City that is in the Land of *Britain*, how the Men of *Boston*, even the *Bostonites*, had arose, a great Multitude, and destroyed the Tea, the abominable Merchandize of the East, and cast it into the Midst of the Sea. . . ." ⁶⁷ Besides this Davis printed: "Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of the American Continental Congress, held at Philadelphia, on the Fifth Day of September, 1774. . . .," the price of which was two shillings;⁶⁸ "The Office and Authority of a Justice of Peace. . . ."; "The speech of the Right Honourable Earl of Chatham, in the House of Lords, on January 20, 1775. . . .";⁶⁹ "The Crisis. A Periodical Paper lately published in London, in 8 numbers";⁷⁰ and "The Journal of the Provincial Congress, Lately held at

⁶⁴ Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 60-61.

⁶⁵ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 15 November, 1751.

⁶⁶ During this period Davis, although he did not mention them in his paper, was actually turning out a number of works, the most numerous of which were the journals of the two houses of the legislature. Weeks, S. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 53-62.

⁶⁷ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 24 February, 1775.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 24 February, 1775.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 16 June, 1775.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 14 July, 1775.

Hillsborough.”⁷¹ In the years 1777 and 1778 Davis’s press continued to be active. He printed, besides the acts of the assembly and the journal of the provincial congress at Halifax, the “Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union between the thirteen united colonies”;⁷² the “Treaty of Friendship and Alliance Concluded between France and the United States”;⁷³ “The Rudiments of the Latin Tongue. . . . By Tho. Rudiman, M.A.”;⁷⁴ and “Dyche’s Spelling Book: or A Guide to the English Tongue.”⁷⁵

After the Revolution works of a more varied nature than ever before were published in the state and advertised for sale. Some of these were: “the Independent Citizen, or the Majesty of the People,” a pamphlet which attacked the powers of the general assembly and which had been reprinted from *Martin’s North Carolina Gazette*;⁷⁶ Iredell’s *Revisal*;⁷⁷ a *History of the American Revolution*, by David Ramsay;⁷⁸ a *History of the Rise, Progress and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America*, by William Gordon, D.D.;⁷⁹ *Human Nature in Its Fourfold State*, by Thomas Boston.⁸⁰

Besides the books which were published in the state after 1783, a number were imported and advertised for sale. “Lord Lyttleton’s history of Henry II, 4 vols.”; “Gordon’s Grammar”; “Newton on the Prophets”; “Laws of the Admiralty, 2 vols.”; “Blackstone’s Law Tracts, 2 vols.”;⁸¹ “Almanacks”;⁸² “Observations on the new constitution. . . ., by a Columbian patriot”;⁸³ “Hutchings’s map of the interior parts of the United States”;⁸⁴ “Ashe’s Commercial Institutes”; “Clarke’s

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 6 October, 1775.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 2 January, 1778.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 29 May, 1778.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 28 August, 1778.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 7 November, 1778.

⁷⁶ *Martin’s North Carolina Gazette*, 15 August, 1787.

⁷⁷ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 8 September, 1788.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 9 January, 1789.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2 April, 1789.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 16 April, 1789.

⁸¹ Thomas Davis’s *North Carolina Gazette*, 16 February, 1786.

⁸² *Martin’s North Carolina Gazette*, 11 July, 1787.

⁸³ *The Wilmington Centinel and General Advertiser*, 18 June, 1788.

⁸⁴ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 7 February, 1788.

Introduction to the making of Latin"; "The New-England Primer improved";⁸⁵—these were a few of the volumes advertised.⁸⁶

The existence of a few private libraries is indicated by the advertisements. Martin Howard, before leaving the state in the summer of 1777, offered for sale "a Variety of Books in Law, History, &c.";⁸⁷ and there were several other notices of "a small library of books,"⁸⁸ or of "some books of law and divinity."⁸⁹ But, although a number of collections of books did exist in North Carolina, they were not frequently mentioned in the newspapers.⁹⁰

In many other ways the advertisements prove themselves a most valuable source of information. They include notices that articles have been lost or found or stolen, that horses have strayed from their owners, that men will not pay debts created by their wives who have "eloped from their bed and board," that letters are unclaimed in the postoffices, that claims against estates must be filed—notice in regard to the most varied phases of the intimate life of the people of North Carolina. Very few indeed are the aspects of this life which are not touched upon in one phase or another.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 8 September, 1788.

⁸⁶ It is possible, although the advertisements do not show that this was the case, that some of these books were printed in the state.

⁸⁷ James Davis's *North Carolina Gazette*, 4 July, 1777.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 12 September, 1777.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 December, 1777.

⁹⁰ For further information on the subject of libraries and the publication and sale of books, see Weeks, S. B., *Libraries and Literature in North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century*.

APPENDIX A

A LIST OF NORTH CAROLINA NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED BEFORE 1790 WHICH
ARE PRESERVED¹ IN THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH
CAROLINA OR IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE NORTH CARO-
LINA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

- a. Original in U. N. C. Library.
- b. Original in Historical Commission.
- x. Photostat copy in U. N. C. Library.
- y. Photostat copy in Historical Commission.

THE NORTH CAROLINA GAZETTE (NEW BERN)

Year	Day and month	Number	Remarks
1751	Nov. 15	15	bxy. Mutilated.
(1752?)	(Mar. 6?)	(31?)	bxy. Mutilated.
1752	Mar. 13	32	bxy.
1753	(July 7?)	(?)	bxy. Pp. 1 & 2 missing.
1757	April 15	103	xy.
1759	Oct. 18	200	xy.
(?)	(?)	(?)	b. Pp. 3 & 4 missing. Mutilated.
1768	(?)	(?)	bxy. Mutilated.
1768	June 24	5	xy.
1769	Nov. 10	73	xy.
1774	July 15	(?)	xy. Pp. 1 & 2 missing.
1774	Sept. 2	287	xy.
1775	Feb. 24	312	xy.
1775	Mar. 24	316	xy.
1775	Apr. 7	318	xy.
1775	May 5	322	xy.
1775	May 12	323	xy.
1775	June 16	328	y.
1775	June 30	330	xy.
1775	July 7	331	xy.
1775	July 14	332	xy.
1775	Oct. 6	344	xy.
1775	Dec. 22	(?)	xy. Pp. (1 & 2?) missing. Mutilated.

A complete file (ay), July 4, 1777, to Nov. 30, 1778, inclusive, (nos. 383 through 456) except: no. 407, Dec. 19, 1777; no. 417, Feb. 27, 1778; no. 420, Mar. 20, 1778; no. 424, Apr. 17, 1778; no. 451, Oct. (23 or 24?), 1778; no. 452, Oct. (30 or 31?), 1778. (No. 398, Oct. 17, 1777, lacks p. 1 & 2. There is a supplement of 1 page to no. 401, Nov. 7, 1777. No. 450, Oct. 16, 1778, is mutilated, lacking the greater part of pp. 3 & 4.)

¹ April, 1927.

NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE (WILMINGTON)

Year	Day and month	Number	Remarks
1765.....	Nov. 27.....	59.....xy.	A "continuation."
1766.....	Feb. 12.....	70.....xy.	Pp. (3 & 4?) missing.
1766.....	Feb. 22.....	72.....xy.	

THE CAPE-FEAR MERCURY (WILMINGTON)

Year	Day and month	Number	Remarks
1769.....	Nov. 24.....	7.....xy.	
1773.....	Jan. 13.....	156.....y.	Pp. 3 & 4 missing.
1773.....	Sept. 22.....	190.....ay.	
1773.....	Dec. 29.....	204.....xy.	
1774.....	May 11.....	223.....b.	Pp. 3 & 4 mutilated.
1774.....	May 18.....	(224?) b.	Pp. 1 & 2 missing. Mutilated.
1775.....	July 28.....	266.....xy.	
1775.....	Aug. 7.....	267.....xy.	
1775.....	Aug. 11.....	268.....xy.	
1775.....	Aug. 25.....	269.....xy.	
1775.....	Sept. 1.....	270.....xy.	

SUPPLEMENT TO THE CAPE-FEAR MERCURY (WILMINGTON)

Year	Day and month	Number	Remarks
1770.....	Oct. 13.....	(46?) a.	Mutilated.
(1770?)..	(Oct. 27?).....	48.....a.	
(1770?)..	(Nov. 10?).....	50.....a.	
(1770?)..	Nov. 17?).....	51.....a.	
(1770?)..	(Nov. 24?).....	52.....a.	

THE NORTH CAROLINA GAZETTE (HILLSBOROUGH)

Year	Day and month	Number	Remarks
1786.....	Feb. 16.....	(?).....ay.	

MARTIN'S NORTH CAROLINA GAZETTE (NEW BERN)

Year	Day and month	Volume	Number	Remarks
1787.....	July 11.....	II.....	80.....xy.	
1787.....	Aug. 15.....	II.....	85.....xy.	
1787.....	Dec. 19.....	II.....	103.....xy.	

THE STATE GAZETTE OF NORTH-CAROLINA (NEW BERN)

Year	Day and month	Volume	Number	Remarks
1787.....	Oct. 4.....	II.....	99.....xy.	
1787.....	Nov. 15.....	III.....	105.....xy.	Pp. 3 & 4 missing.
1788.....	Feb. 7.....	III.....	117.....xy.	Mutilated.
1788.....	Mar. 27.....	III.....	124.....b.	

THE EDENTON INTELLIGENCER

Year	Day and month	Volume	Number	Remarks
1788.....	Apr. 9.....	I.....	25.....	xy. Spelled <i>Intelligencer</i> .
1788.....	June 4.....	I.....	33.....	x. Spelled <i>Intelligencer</i> .

THE WILMINGTON CENTINEL AND GENERAL ADVERTISER

Year	Day and month	Volume	Number	Remarks
1788.....	June 18.....	I.....	16.....	xy.

THE STATE GAZETTE OF NORTH-CAROLINA (EDENTON)

A complete file (ay), Sept. 8, 1788, to Dec. 31, 1789, inclusive (Vol. III, no. 140, through Vol. IV, no. 208).

FAYETTEVILLE GAZETTE

Year	Day and month	Volume	Number	Remarks
1789.....	Aug. 24.....	I.....	1.....	b.
1789.....	Sept. 14.....	I.....	4.....	ay.
1789.....	Sept. 21.....	I.....	5.....	ay.
1789.....	Oct. 12.....	I.....	8.....	ay.

APPENDIX B

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM NORTH CAROLINA NEWSPAPERS, 1787-1789

To the collection of articles here reprinted belongs also *The Independent Citizen*, a series of essays first published in *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, and later issued by Martin in pamphlet form (1787). That series, however, was included in the issue of *The North Carolina Historical Review* for January, 1927; and to print it again would be superfluous. The articles here presented begin with a reply to *The Independent Citizen*. Then follow contributions from "A Juryman" and "A Citizen and Soldier," and the answers to them. Finally come the somewhat lengthy series of letters of "Aratus" and the rebuttals which it drew forth.

The theme developed by "The Independent Citizen," "A Juryman" and "Aratus" is in general the same: that the constitution of the state must be strictly observed, that the legislature must be prevented from overstepping its rightful authority, and that the powers of the executive and judicial departments of government must be strengthened. So similar are these three articles to each other that it is very probable they all came from the pen of the same man. That is the opinion of the writer who adopted the *nom de plume* of "A Farmer." The point of view is that of James Iredell and Archibald Maclaine, although it is hardly possible that either of these men was the author.

The contribution signed "A Citizen and Soldier" is included because "A Farmer" thinks the writer is the same person who composed the other articles. It is true that the style is very much the same; but the subject is a different one and the ideas expressed are more radical. The letter was written less than three weeks after the North Carolina convention of 1788 had refused to ratify the new federal constitution, the author, who strongly favored the state's entrance into the union, hinting in his "appeal to the minority" that force ought to be used to accomplish this purpose. He may have been the same man who wrote the other essays, but there is no conclusive evidence to show that this was the case.

*From A Yeoman*¹

MR. MARTIN.

I HAVE read the five numbers of the *Independent Citizen*, in your useful paper. Independent of the Gentleman's learning, his letters contain a great deal of sound sense, and I must confess have awakened me from my dream. I had always thought that the House of Assembly were the Lords and Governors of the State, and superior to every other power; but when the *Independent Citizen* talks of the *Majesty of the People* and the *Voice of the Constitution* the Assembly appears in fact to be but a *secondary body* in the scale of government.

¹ *Martin's North Carolina Gazette*, 15 August, 1787.

The Constitution, the supreme law of the State, has said in the 44th section "the Declaration of Rights is hereby declared to be part of the Constitution of this State, and ought never to be violated *on any pretence whatsoever*." Now, in the Declaration of Rights, section the twelfth, it is said, "No Freeman shall *in any manner*, be deprived of his life, liberty or property, but *by his Peers*." And in the fourteenth section, it is said, "In *ALL controversies* at law the trial by jury is one of the best securities of the rights of the people, and ought to remain *sacred* and inviolable[.]"

When on the one hand, I look at these three articles of our sacred Constitution, which we have erected in blood; and after, on the other hand, observe several late acts of our Assembly, the members of our legislature appear, either to have forgot that there ever existed any such thing as a Constitution, or to have wilfully trampled it under their feet. And, here I must cordially agree with the *Independent Citizen* that every such violation of the Constitution, *is treason against the state*. The gentleman need not to have quoted any authority upon the occasion, common sense and the Constitution tell me so. *Luke Day* and *Shays* in Massachusetts, openly dared to disturb the public peace and to create insurrection—these men no doubt were guilty of treason—they complained of grievances which were not redressed and they boldly took up arms—while I hate the treason, I love the traitors for their openness and generosity. But here, under the mask of sound policy, under the aim of authority our legislators damn the Constitution and trample the Bill of Rights under their feet. With the *Independent Citizen*, I must agree *it is rank treason*.

The *Independent Citizen* appears to be a man possessed of warm and enlightened notions of freedom: but when he says that the legislature cannot be sued, that damages cannot be recovered of them, that they cannot be beheaded (alluding to Charles the first) I disagree with him so far, for in the the [sic] twenty third session [section] of our glorious Constitution, it is said, "That the Governor or *other officers*, offending against the State, *by violating any part of the Constitution*, maladministration or corruption may be prosecuted on the impeachment of the General Assembly, or presentment of the Grand Jury of any court of superior jurisdiction in the state." From hence though a plain, unlettered man, I would infer three things.

First, That every member of the Assembly is liable to be impeached by a future Assembly, or, secondly presented to the grand jury, for infringing an article of the Constitution, or thirdly, amenable [sic] to any hereafter convention of the people.

The *Independent Citizen* says in his fifth number, that he will not allow himself to be a dupe of opinion, or so far tied down to the strict letter of the law, as not to admit that from the necessity of the thing, the trial by jury may in some cases be dispensed with, and he quotes instances of the courts conscience of Georgia and Virginia. But here I disagree with him, and I will explain myself. The courts of conscience in Georgia and Virginia were established prior to the revolution, and as in each of these states the trial by jury is declared to be a fundamental

law, no further power can be given to these extraneous courts. Prior to the revolution, a single justice in this State had only jurisdiction to the extent of forty shillings, (1762, c. 2, s. 17) and as the Bill of Rights succeeded and declared the trial by jury to be sacredly had in all cases whatever, no trial without a jury, beyond forty shillings can be had in any case, without infringing or violating the Constitution. I am therefore of opinion, that the £5 law, the £10 law and the £20 law, are all equally illegal and unconstitutional.

If the General Assembly will trifle with the Constitution in one instance, they may equally do so in another. No line can be drawn, *the cloud which arose from the sea no bigger than a man's head* may carry the tempest in its bosom. But I would recommend to the justices, who seem to be the men that are grasping after the phantom of authority, not to trample on the Constitution for the attainment of their wishes, but to call a Convention. Here they may lay their views before the people at large, and perhaps gain their ends by honorable means. Should they persist in their distracted career, the Majesty of the people will one day, *Snatch from their hand the sceptre & the rod, Bejudge their justice, be the god of god.*

I am with much respect,

Sir;

Your much instructed and obedient, humble servant,

A YEOMAN.

Westfields, near Salisbury, July 30.

*From A Juryman*¹

For the Edenton Intelligencer.

Mr. Murphy.

In your Paper of the 9th of January last, I read an *Ordinance* of the General Assembly, in favor of Thomas Vail. —The resolution of this Assembly did not at that time make any impression upon my mind more than other incidents in the *passing current of the day*. — But my surprise was great, when on the return of our members I was told that the *Depositions* which were taken for the purpose of a New-Trial, were *Ordered to be entered on the Journals*—that a memorial was handed to the House against his Hon. Judge Spencer, which had nearly drawn on an *Impeachment* against him—And still more was my wonder increased, when one of the Gentlemen who had attended the Assembly, *insinuated somewhat roundly*—that Mr. Vail had acquitted himself with honor.

I entertain no doubt, but that the Gentlemen who signed the Petition for Mr. Vail, were actuated from motives of the *purest humanity*, in procuring some indulgent step, at least to moderate the harsh sentence of the Law. But where was the necessity of a Prayer to the Legislature, when a *legal* mode of application to the Executive lay open to them, and

¹ *The Edenton Intelligencer*, 9 April, 1788.

that not difficult of access? Where was the necessity of introducing *depositions* (as they are called) of *Record* to wound the dignity of judicial proceedings? Where was the necessity of procuring a witness to draw a veil over common notoriety, or to stamp credit where none was necessary?—Where was the necessity of importing a high misde-meanor in office to the Clerk and the first officers of the State? Or where was the necessity of impeaching in an *improper form*, the *sacred Record of a Court of Justice*, and *challenging an authority paramount to the Laws of the Land*.

For it is certain — that the . . . [?] was illegal and unprecedented.—It is certain, that the Clerk of the Superior Court is a Gentleman, and that his *Honor Judge Spencer, conducted himself with his usual reputation*. It is certain that any depositions which were taken, were altogether *ex parte and in a corner*—It is certain, that the Witnesses have outstepped modesty—It is undubitably certain, that the Verdict, *Guilty* of passing the Note *knowing it to be Forged*, was enregistered in a *formal solemn and sacred manner*.—And it is equally certain, that the *then* Governor would not have risked his popularity in refusing a Pardon against the pressing prayer of Gentlemen so highly respectable as many of the petitioners were.

Allow me to call your attention to the proceedings of the House on this business—they envelop three matters of the greatest moment to every Citizen of the State.

1st. The unconstitutional usurpation of the Legislature on the Judiciary.

2d. The impeachment of the sacred character of a Judge, and

3dly. An attack upon the momentous Palladium of our Liberties, the *Trial by Jury*.

It is unnecessary to trouble you with the Petition or the Address to the House by the presenting member,—but listen to the *Resolution*.

“Whereas it has been represented to the General Assembly, and “*confirmed by se-several [sic] depositions, and those of Record*, and by “*the testimony of the Sheriff*, who was present at the Trial, “that Thomas “Vail, of the County of Chowan, has been indicted in the Superior “Court of Law and Equity, for the District of Edenton, for Forging “and Publishing knowing to be Forged, in November, 1786, an Obli- “gatory Note, and that on the Trial of the said indictment *The Jury* “*found him not Guilty*; yet, by *some accident the said Verdict was . . .* “[?] and whereas it appears that the said Vail, has heretofore supported “a *fair and unblemished character*.”

I shall pass over the Blunders in the Petition and the *Ordinance* of the House, in point of Grammar and Technical expression. In Zeal it abounds, and candor might say, that the Gentlemen who forwarded the Business were in a hurry.—There is nothing like *Dispatch of Business*, answered the raw Hunter (on striking the Hare with his whip) to the Master of the Hounds:—But shall we Mr. Printer, be *whipped out* of our Liberties, and shall Judges be abused because *good meaning men* are in a hurry.

Under your favor, Mr. Printer, permit me to lay before the Public, a few animadversions upon the glaring *Attack* made by the *Assembly* on the *seperate* and *Independent Rights* of the *Judiciary*, involving in its usurpation the most destructive consequences;—*Upon the upright conduct of his Honor Judge Spencer, who sat on the Trial, with Dignity and Impartiality—and upon the Verdict disagreed on by the Jury.*

A JURYMAN.

*From A Citizen and Soldier*¹

*To the People of the District of Edenton.
My Friends and Fellow Countrymen,*

The hour fast approacheth when the trumpet of calamity will reach you. After having unequivocally experienced the impotent feebleness of confederate America, an efficient government was offered to you; which with disdainful scorn, a majority in Convention has treacherously rejected.

I already conceive from my own knowledge, and your well approved attachment to good government, that you are at a loss to discover, the best remedy to extricate us from our present forlorn condition,—I am apt to presume that you are bewildered in your thoughts of the future; and with confidence I hope, that with indignant pride, you feel the fatal blow that your unhappy country has suffered. Be assured I am no stranger to such feelings; my mind has been on the rack of torture to vent itself to you—my heart hath bled for you, without an ability to express the language of expedience, or wisdom.—I have often been led to suppose, from the suggestions of timidity, that *things would come about and times turn better of their own accord.* But this is the language of despair; this is the fainting hope of the dispirited authority; this is the whining of a schoolboy to the relentless tyrant: This is praying to Jupiter, without putting our shoulders to the wheel.

Trust me, my fellow countrymen, I have no design in addressing you but for our mutual good. I am equally to enjoy or to suffer with *you*. But the God of fate hath blown a blast inimical to our salvation—The sun of North-Carolina hath already set—Clouds and thick tempest compasses [*sic*] and we are the weary wanderer in midnight darkness.

My present object is, with modest diffidence, to suggest to you the necessity of an appeal to the minority of the state. I may be mistaken, but I address you from the fixed conviction of my soul, that you are at this instant a ruined people. Tyranny and oppression may with tardy step approach you, but anarchy and confusion are at hand. The consequences, which in all human probability, must await the rejection of the constitution are to the last degree menacing from all quarters.

Let us endeavour to draw the curtain of our fate, let us hold the mirror up to nature—Let us discover the accursed authors of our misery; let us with undaunted stedfastness view the dreadful situation of our

¹ *The State Gazette of North-Carolina*, 22 September, 1788.

country. Let us examine her wounds; and let us then see, if there is no *balm in Gilead*, if there is no healthful restorative to revive her decayed vigour.

While with the love of a brother I expect you will pardon my rashness, in attempting a subject of such momentous consequence, allow me to call upon you all to offer your mite, in the same blunt manner with myself. Let us communicate freely our sentiments to the world and to one another.

The indignant feelings of a mind unacquainted with reproach hath roused me to address you.—Will you permit a soldier who hath served you, who bleeds with the wounds of his country, in the hour of danger to come forward? Will you permit an humble citizen? and who in each respect, in the hour of peace or war, will not be daunted by the arm of power; who is feelingly alive to the distresses of his parent; who will ever be bold to brand the villainy of men in office; and who as long as he hath a hand to act, a tongue to speak, or a heart to flutter, shall be ready to serve you as

A CITIZEN and SOLDIER.

August 20, 1788.

From Willie Jones¹

Mess. Hodge & Wills,

A SMALL pamphlet, signed, "*A CITIZEN and SOLDIER*," addressed to the inhabitants of the Edenton district, lately fell into my hands. I do not know who wrote it, nor where it was printed, but it was brought from Edenton to Halifax.—the writer asserts, that I called the Members of the Grand Convention, generally, and General Washington and Col. Davie, in particular, *scoundrels*²—To this I answer that I never said so of the whole, or any one of these gentlemen. I know as little of many of the Members of that Convention, as this angry soldier (who perhaps never drew a sword in the service of his country) knows of me; therefore it would have been wrong for me to call them scoundrels.—As to General Washington, I have long thought and still think him the first and best character in the world. As to Col. Davie, I have a personal regard for him; I *think* him an honest man and a valuable member of the community, and I *know* him to be a man of genius, and knowledge in his profession. To make short of the matter, I swear that nothing can exceed the respect I bear for these two gentlemen, unless it be my scorn and contempt for the "*CITIZEN and SOLDIER*."

Be pleased to publish this in your paper, and you will oblige, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

WILLIE JONES.

Halifax, October, 1788.

¹ *Ibid.*, 20 October, 1788.

² The pamphlet referred to obviously does not include the same material as does the letter by "A Citizen and Soldier" which is printed above. In the latter article the writer makes no statement such as that which Jones mentions.

*From An Honest Man*¹

To Willie Jones, Esquire.

A PUTANIST in oaths has as little credit given to his off-hand swearing, as a common prostitute, when she bridles up, acts the prude and lectures on chastity. Your seeming scorn and spurn at the Soldier and Citizen, is but a poor evasion. It is true it is a clumsy performance; it charges heavily; stand forward, answer it, give reputation to your 182 who negatived the learned labour of the choicest worthies of our Empire.—Produce to public view your thoughts, your wisdom, your objections to the code handed us from the Federal Convention; or like the grave digger in Hamlet, confess your self: Or in a manly, honest manner, make the best apology in your power.

You are a member of the General Assembly, have unburthened yourself of the burthen of being a Councillor of the state; call together, embattle your myrmidons, head and command them, redress, if possible, your errors, bring forward a new and second Convention, and with a clean mouth and sweet blood, assist and support the country you have injured, to peace, happiness and honour; to a stand and rank amongst the civilized trading nations of the earth: Then you may once more be seated in the breast of

An HONEST MAN.

October 23, 1788.

*From a Member*²

Mess. HODGE and WILLS.

In Mr. Murphy's paper of Wednesday, the 9th of April, a person under the signature of "A Juryman" invokes the attention of the public on the proceedings of the General Assembly respecting Thomas Vail; he begins with marvels, and if I may be at liberty to express my sentiments on them, must conclude as the great poet, with some little variation, that they have brought forth mice. Was there a cause for wonder that the General Assembly should have entered on the journals the grounds of their proceedings, that it might redound to the satisfaction of any person who was inquisitive enough to read them?—As to a memorial that had nearly brought on an impeachment, it is equally false with his wonders; nor do I recollect a single recital in it that was not supported by undoubted proof, nor a single allusion that reflected the least discredit to his Honour Judge Spencer; a mistake as to entering the verdict and against the intention of the jury cannot be denied. And can it be possible that any man, who entertains a moral or political sentiment, who is not deluded by passion, prejudice or ignorance, will undertake to alledge that an entry in any proceedings should be regarded, though it be positively false and contrary to the intention and express declaration of those whom they alledge gave a sanction for it? A belief of this kind must at once suppose that the stroke of a pen or mistake

¹ Ibid., 27 October, 1788.² Loc. cit.

of a Clerk, should be validated in preference to the positive oaths of the jury. A person possessed with an opinion of this last, I hope will embrace some mode of convincing the world that their proceedings are infallible, which will be an illumination that they are at present at a loss for. He says that the interference of the legislature was illegal and unconstitutional. It cannot be supposed that there was any member of the legislature who would not promote the interest of his country, perhaps sooner than Mr. Juryman. What an accumulated stock of impudence must such an incendiary have?—How ought such a prophetic and omnipotent being's absence be regretted in all matters of doubt and difficulty—one whole knowledge and genius is sufficient to preponderate a nation. But alas, the fault perhaps is on the side of Providence; though it is possible the mistake with more propriety may be charged on his fellow citizens, who have not penetration enough to consider him competent to the discharge of the public trust, otherwise they could not have deprived themselves of such a dictator.—To convince the public that what he has urged is false, and designed only as an imposition, I will refer them to the XIXth section in the constitution and XIIth in the bill of rights, and then they will find that the General Assembly have done no thing but what they had an absolute right to do by the standard of our liberties—the constitution. As to impeaching in an improper forum (as he calls it) the records of a court of justice, he certainly at the time of this expression could not have possessed his intellectual faculties, for the court themselves set aside such entry from a full conviction that it was wrong, and not having it in their power fifteen hours after the jury were discharged to reverse it; during which space they had been subject to the embraces of many disingenuous and base minds, in order to dissuade them from dissenting to an entry which they had done at the bar, before pen was put to paper, which they have deposed; and this fact is also corroborated by the Sheriff, who counted them after retiring.

After these sacred truths, which many are acquainted with beside those who have deposed, I would ask if ten thousand men were to swear that they did not hear them, if it would or ought to make any difference as to the fact: If it was true then, it must be true now, and will ever remain so. There is an idea on this point that evidently appears to those of the smallest capacity, that his Honour Judge Spencer was not to blame for a thing he did not hear, and consequently the defendant not bound by the laws of the land for a transaction that was at least grounded on a mistake, or accident, perhaps at that time invisible. As to the depositions being taken *ex parte*, or in a corner, it is a most eggregious falsehood; they were taken in open court the same term of the trial, copies of which, with all the records relative thereto, were transmitted to the General Assembly, and there acknowledged by the Clerk to be true; there were some taken out of court that related to the trial, it being impossible to have them all taken in court by reason of its being the last moment of the court, and there was not time. As to the gentlemen who conducted the business being in a hurry, it is as true as the other allegations of Mr. Juryman. Its origin before its determination was nine days, and then there was but one dissenting voice in the whole House of Commons,

and that was by the mellifluous ———; it was then transmitted to the Senate, and the next day was concurred with by nearly the whole house.

As to the improprieties in the resolution, I must confess the most superficial scholar would have discerned it, without the assistance of an Argus-ey'd Juryman; nor was that published a true copy of the original without the additional dress of the ———, who I suppose put it into the hands of the Printer.—Permit me, therefore, Mess. Printers, with as little intrusion on your paper as possible, to give as compendious a narration, and that as strictly consistent with truth, as can be done.

The defendant, in November 1786, was indicted in one bill which contained two charges, that of forging, and publishing knowing it to be forged; on this issue the whole subject depended. The day after the bill of indictment was found, the defendant being as I suppose distressed at the thoughts of having any charge of the kind, immediately came to trial without having a single witness, but rested his defence totally on the testimony that might be given in behalf of the state; the jury after the usual proceedings came to the bar and were counted by the Sheriff, and asked by the Clerk for their verdict; to which they answered by their foreman, that the defendant was not guilty of the forgery, but was guilty of publishing; these were the express words, the jury meaning as they have deposed, that the defendant had passed it to another person as it had passed thro' several hands before the defendant had passed it, and not considering that the word guilt implied a crime. The Judge by hearing the word guilt mentioned, dictated to the Clerk to enter the verdict as guilty of publishing the bill or note knowing it to be forged—the jury hearing how the Judge dictated to the Clerk to enter the verdict, at this moment answered by their foreman that it was not their verdict or meaning. They not receiving any answer from the Judge (he not hearing them) but being somewhat confused, and thinking that it was entering as they intended it, and perhaps not understanding the technical words of it, the defendant was required to give bail, which instantly disclosed to the jury how the verdict was entered. They then proclaimed it to Mr. Iredell, who with great emotion and his usual delicacy, earnestly insisted that the Judge answered in these positive words, that he was alone on the bench, and would not wish to have any thing done that night. And I firmly believe that he was not at this moment apprised of the inextricable difficulties which that moment's neglect would draw on; for it was impossible with any degree of propriety to rescind that entry the next day by the same jury. A practice of this cast would totally viciate the solemnity of a trial by jury, which is the only colour of liberty that we now possess.—It is notorious that his Honour Judge Ashe delivered his opinion from the bench in November term, 1787, that from the face of the whole proceedings the jury intended to acquit the defendant; but the court could not at that time go into an explanation.

The General Assembly without doubt were convinced that the prosecution was conducted with a spirit of malignity very foreign to the purpose of doing public justice, and could not deny pronouncing the defendant acquitted, and adopting such constitutional steps to their officers as they thought most eligible. A trial did take place which no man will

deny, and it could not have been a nullity which the Judges themselves invalidated the same term. A new trial after an acquittance is unknown in a criminal case by the laws of the land—the indispensable rights of a jury, the duty of a Judge as limited by law, and the powers of a Parliament of Assembly, are called forth on this subject as the first instance since the late revolution, which truly deserves the observation of the community. The history of each is extensive, and I hope that I shall hereafter be permitted to offer a few observations on the animadversions of Mr. Juryman, which I mean to do not without producing my authorities, that the world may be capable of forming a precise opinion, without calling to my aid either falsehoods of impositions, which are truly as unbecoming as they are unnecessary; and it is to be lamented that Mr. Juryman is not properly known, that the public might be able to stamp some credit or discredit as to his real importance, and not to skulk apparently under the ground of a Judge or other person, and offer his sentiments coloured with blackness, instead of mentioning his authorities which might command more repute and attention; and not because he had perhaps been treated with deserved disrespect, set up his comments in opposition to the conduct of a country, which if it had treated him with as little charity as he had bestowed gratitude, he must long before this have submitted to the dire resort of perpetually soliciting a sustenance from that very source, which he now has arrogance enough to attempt to reprobate.

A MEMBER.

*Letters from Aratus*¹

To the PRINTERS.

No. I.

Camden, April 20, 1789.

HAVING some time ago perused the letters of a Juryman upon the constitutional powers of the legislative, executive and judicial departments of our government, we conceive his ideas to be apt, and that his cursory observations might be extended to advantage, when stript of their technical dress. We shall therefore endeavour to enquire more minutely into the democratic powers of each of these three branches of our republican system, keeping in our view the tract of the letters above mentioned.

At a general convention of the people, by their delegates, held at Halifax, in 1776, it was laid down as an express position or axiom, that the sovereignty of all governments existed in the people only. Tired out and oppressed by a distant monarch, they disentangled themselves from his power, and on this principle established the form of government we now enjoy. The territory being too extensive for the action of a simple-unmixt democracy, it was deemed necessary, that the people should be convened by their delegates in Gen. Assembly.

A constitution being then instituted, consisting of a legislative, execu--

¹ These five letters appear serially in the issues of *The State Gazette of North Carolina* for 7 and 14 May, 4 June, 2 and 23 July, 1789.

tive and judicial, *co evil* [co-eval], *co-existent*, *separate and independent*, *each to act in its own proper sphere and province, for the general welfare of the community*; the convention rightly judging, that to place the power of government in one man, or body of men, or even in a General Assembly without controul, would not only be impolitic and dangerous, but contrary to every maxim of government laid down by political writers.

To investigate our present mixt form of government, would be too extensive for this pa-paper [*sic*]*—it would be an interesting and a fine speculation—but as we intend to keep within narrow limits, suffer at this instant the executive and judicial to rest, that we may succinctly speak of the legislative; and here no great abilities or genius are necessary, as the business is simple, natural, limited and confined within written boundaries.*

In the monarchy of Great Britain, the prerogatives of the Prince, and the rights of the people, form an extensive subject for the learned, in *precedent, usurpation or right*; this with Britons is a mighty subject, yet to them too fine, subtle and dangerous to admit of a full investigation. In the establishment of our government, the *forming worthies*, breathing the sentiments, and being bred and educated under the laws of Great Britain, retained them in full view, in no manner yielding up their lineage, ancestry or laws. They proceeded to form a constitution: The business was already formed.

How to get rid of the *lumberment* of government, a *King*, and at the same time to establish a permanent prerogative, was an arduous and mighty labour. Here we may, without the assumption of deep learning, or the taxation of pedantry, distinguish or difference the governments, *monarchy and democracy*, from each other, most essentially, in the case of prerogative. *In a monarchy* the Prince is supported by a strong hereditary nobility; a full and ample investigation of the prerogative might endanger the rights of the people. *In a democracy*, a material, political and essential *personage* is erected, and fully written and enrolled amongst the archives of the state, for the good, the order and preservation of the whole, in which is vested the *sovereignty* of the state, supported by those *democratic prerogatives*, commonly called (much venerated until lately) the *declaration of rights and the constitution*.

Having thus in a simple manner paved our way, we will attempt to define and declare the order and business of the General Assembly. War, peace, religion, taxation, revenues, &c. &c. being not in our view, are intentionally omitted.

The great extent of the state, as before set out, demanded, that the people should be represented by their delegates, who when elected, convened and qualified, form an essential order, the *General Assembly*, whose business it is to make rules, ordinances and regulations called acts of Assembly, *just equal and impartial*, for the safety, decency, order and general good of the *whole* people, and the honour and dignity of the state, perfectly *consonant to the constitution, girt around* and supported by the *declaration of rights*, without presuming at amplification, restriction, construction, or as the lawyers say, the equity, the spirit, but *fixed*

and *bound down* by the plain grammatical expression of the words thereof. A deviation from this plain constitutional definition, an over-leaping the powers delegated, is *tyranny*. A deviation would be an assumption of power which would swallow up the democratic prerogatives before mentioned, which are *beings* in the people they cannot delegate, without a total abolition of the present form of government. We beg leave to observe, the sovereignty, even after delegation, and at all times is fixed and immovable in the people, and never is, and in no manner can be, in the Assembly or delegated. This definition naturally introduces into action the executive and judicial, and will manifest their *independent, separate and controuling powers* of efficiency and utility in the pure and regular government of the state; and at the same time may with propriety introduce a group of suppositions that will probably never exist; yet as they may in the rage and riot of power, the extension of the prospect will the better exemplify our observations in manifesting the controuling *importance, use and powers* of the *executive and judicial*.

From scripture, without a taxation of impiety, we may be admitted to draw a precedent, which at this day of enlightened philosophy would make virtue stand astonished, and humanity revolt: I Saumel xv. 1. "Samuel said unto Saul," verse 3, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." And in the holy bible Solomon says, "There is nothing new under the sun." This if granted—let us suppose that the Assembly in the wild riot of power should enact, and thereby enjoin and command the executive to draw together a strong body of men, and appoint them with all the habilments of war, embattle and march them into any county of the state, and command the Governor to smite all the inhabitants, and utterly destroy all they have, and spare them not; but slay both men and women, infant and suckling! Must this horrid law be complied with? Had the executive no negative, no power of action?

This would rouse the chief magistrate to enquire and search into his dignity, power and authority.

ARATUS.

To the PRINTERS.

No. II.

Camden, April 20, 1789.

It is too generally thought, that the Executive is a simple machine, appointed for the purpose of signing and sealing commissions, receiving public dispatches, to hand them to the Assembly, to act in non-essentials, to receive a small salary, to be called Governor or Excellency, to take the wall of all other citizens, and the head of table at feasts, or the lead on public cavalcades and processions, and on all days of ceremony and ostentation to be the chief figure in the group. A petty man this indeed!

The state of this officer has always appeared to us in a more exalted light; to exemplify this character, let it be supposed that a body of the Lords and Commons of the Parliament of Great-Britain should bring in

a bill to repeal magna charta, the bill of rights, and totally abolish the habeas corpus act. Would not the bringing in of this bill be judged treason in the agents? Would it not be deemed a complotting and conspiring the death of the King? We think we see the traitors condemned and dragged to condign punishment.

Suppose the monarch deeply engaged in the plot, must and ought the people to be passive? The wise and patriotic would advert to first principles, and as in the time of Charles the first, declare the sovereignty of the empire to be constitutionally vested in the people, and perhaps for the common good, revive and act the old trajedy of regisissiation over again.

We may not bring his Excellency on the political governmental stage, to act in stile with more and proper dignity.

The law is passed! The county, the people and every living creature therein devoted! The Assembly adjourned, the traitors quietly seated in their habitations!

The Governor steps forward—a man, bold, wise, just, of an ancient generous lineage, learned in the laws of his country and the rights of man, a patriot, and one perhaps who ably aided in the formation of the constitution and the declaration of rights.

The horrid bill is delivered, with the impious mandate of the Assembly! It is natural to enquire, how he would deport himself on the occasion. Would not the vain and idle character of pomp and pageantry be lost? Would he not clothe himself with all the powers and authority of the constitutional confidence and trust reposed in him? Would he not become active, essentially and efficiently the Chief Magistrate of the state? If wise, just, bold, as above related, we conceive he would retire to his closet, and prostrate himself before the God of governments—would call to his aid the wise men and elders, but more especially the judicial, the Judges of the land, who are bound by the same sacred oaths to preserve the constitution inviolate. Here is an ample field—we leave our countrymen room for genius and expatiation—to go further may be too adventurous and bold, travelling in an unexplored country, treading on mystic ground. We will terminate this head and venture a dogma. That the executive, with the advice of his Council of the State, has an indubitable right, and that it is his duty in the recess of the General Assembly, as often as the legislature shall enact laws in violation of the constitution and the powers delegated by the sovereignty of the people, either by proclamation to impede the injurious attack, or to convene a general convention of the state, that they may have an instant opportunity to advert to first principles, ere the disease becomes so morbid, as to demand an amputation.

ARATUS.

No. III.

HAVING proceeded thus far, we shall attempt an investigation of the *third order* of government; an order of the greatest consequences to the rights and liberties of the citizen—we mean the *Judicial*. An order often spoken of, but little understood.

We wish at the formation of the constitution, its influence and powers had been fully explained, delineated and investigated by the forming worthies. This prudential foresight might have preserved the reputation, honour and credit of the state. At least this prudence would have given our laws the appearance of honesty and common sense.

Unhappily for our country, they were young in government—unfledged politicians. Dependent on Great-Britain, our Assemblies before that period had little to do with politics or government, except now and then a dispute with a petty despot; of course their knowledge therein was limited and confused.

It is certain they had nothing in view, but how to repel the powers of the Rex Basilicus of Great-Britain. This on a view of the business must manifestly appear to the judicious at first sight; and, if they had acted without the aid of the *Bill of Rights* and the *Habeas Corpus* act, the whole would have been (from intention or knowledge) a dead letter. They intended well—they were full of that spirit of liberty and virtue, which enlivens and gives action and energy to the patriot character: They deserve and truly merit our praise: They were *patriots* but not *legislators*: No trait of that kind of knowledge appearing in their composition.

In the formation of all governments, power ought to be divided amongst many—there should be ponderating powers, and a power to preponderate. This is an essential policy, as well in all mundane as coelestial divisions of power. If we look at the constitution of North-Carolina, all power and authority, at first sight, seems vested in the General Assembly. But it is our business to develope that ill-founded opinion, by unraveling the subject in such a manner, that an error taken up in haste may as hastily be done away.

In speaking of the Legislature, we took into our consideration monarchy, and used analogy and comparison. The *Judicial* of our democracy runs an equal pace with a monarchical judiciary, but steps forward to an almost undetermined distance—not only acting in all law occurrences, determining *meum & tuum*, adjusting all difference in law and equity as the monarchical judiciary; but from the nature of our government, as may be easily deduced from the constitution itself, *pro salute reipublicae*, it advances higher, and becomes the *equilibrium* or *pendulum* thereof.

We are well aware this doctrine will sound ruffly in the ears of many of our demagogues of power, who have been subverting the constitution, and unhinging the first principles of the common law, *mounting on stilts* Justices of the Peace, as well within court as without. And at the same time degrading and humiliating the learned and wise Judges of the superior courts of law and equity, the *only bulwark* the faithful liesges have to depend on against lawless *power* and *usurpation*.

But as in this case we aim at explication, we shall cautiously shun declamation.

ARATUS.

NUMBER IV.

THE Judicial of our state is what we shall attempt to explain, not simply, but to draw a full, perfect, and essential character, manifesting not only its civil but political agency. In this attempt we have viewed our subject in several lights, hoping by some fortunate stroke to have brought it to a just conclusion. We have wandered through a great extent of business, too comprehensive for the limits of this paper. We will confine ourselves within narrower bounds; presuming with propriety and system, and with the aid of the sages of the law, to analyze the character, office, duty, and origin of a Judge of this state. This enquiry will, of consequence, bring into sight the Justices of the Peace; the wise, unconfined, and unlimited Judges of all matters of law, abstruse and arduous of determination, in the County Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions; presenting in comparison a gloomy contrast, expressive of the ill-fated condition of the jurisprudence of our country: To this dissection we will adduce an auxiliary question or two, which, we conceive, without the drapery of a comment, will warrant what we above set down as a dictum, "*that the Judicial, pro salute reipublica, becomes the equilibrium and pendulum of our government.*"

My Lord Coke, in his proem to his 4 Repts. says, *a Judge should be as God himself just*. In the kingdom of England the Judges are always appointed from the learned sergeants of the law, reverend for their authority, learning, experience, wisdom and probity, deeply read in the ancient and modern laws and customs of mankind; and now by the judicious and wise laws of that country, placed above the licentiousness of power, and nobly appointed; by means whereof they may act without terror, in despite of public danger or private malice.

Having taken a step to our parent country, from whence we drew all our sources of knowledge, wisdom, and government, borrowing from no servile land, we will present our countrymen with the 13th section of our constitution, which says, "That a General Assembly shall by joint ballot of both Houses, appoint Judges of the Supreme Courts of Law, who shall be commissioned by the Governor, and hold their offices during their good behaviour." And the 23d section, "That the Governor and other officers offending against the state, by violating any part of the constitution, maladministration, or corruption, may be prosecuted on the presentment or impeachment of the General Assembly." Having drawn the character of the Judges at Westminster, and shewn the origin and creation of the Judges of this state, it may be necessary to observe, that there is no order of men from whence they are to be chosen, nor quality or quantity of abilities designated. In authority, learning, experience, wisdom, probity, and fortitude, they stand in equality. Here we may, without the fervor of a poet's fancy, imagine we see them hand in hand, peripatetic, under some shady grove, sagely conversing on providence, the wise order of nature, and the extensive business of law and government; presenting, in prospect, a more interesting portraiture than the sublime Shaftsbury ever drew.

It is appointed by law, that the Judges ere they enter on their office

and duty, take two holy sacraments—an oath of fidelity to the state, and a comprehensive oath of duty: And that the weight of these oaths and holy sacraments, may be fully understood by our countrymen, it will be necessary and of great improvement to enquire into and point out what constitutes *the laws of the land*: —And here, without a pause, a doubt, or a moment's contemplation, we answer, that *Magna Charta*, the *many statutes* so often adjudged and so interwoven with the common law, that their originals scarcely ever come in view, and which to interfere with, would produce most dangerous effects—the constitution and bills of rights entered into, ordained and constituted by the majesty and superb monarchy of the people in Congress assembled, at Halifax, on the glorious and important 18th day of December, 1776, are the *supreme laws of the land*, and constitute the palladium of our civil and political rights and liberties, irrevocable and unalterable. And we humbly think those *rules and ordinances* commonly called acts of Assembly, arising from circumstances, incidents of time and necessity, may with propriety be denominated bye or secondary laws; inferior, and to be abridged and enlarged, altered or abrogated as time, cause, the rural, commercial, or civil policy of the state may demand. And over these secondary laws, the Judges of the Supreme Courts of Law have an indubitable rule, as we promise ourselves hereafter fully to make appear. The two oaths mentioned, merit consideration. The one is an oath of allegiance to the monarchy of the people, by whom they are *created*, and by the Assembly nominated. By this oath they solemnly swear to preserve the constitution inviolate, under the penalty of an impeachment, as set forth in the constitution; and we may add, not inaptly, the odious sin of perjury. By the second they swear to do equal justice between man and man, *civiliter*, and between the state and man *criminaliter*.

ARATUS.

As two Jackanapes' have attacked Aratus, he begs leave to inform them for fear of mistake, that he may be personally heard of by applying to the Printers.

NUMBER V.

To exemplify our position, causes us to pause. —Time, place, and circumstance, claim attention.

In the eastern states, education and science, the only foundation on which a perfect government can be erected, have made a noble stand; if a performance on the subject of government, law, science, or the useful arts, makes its appearance, it is searched after with avidity—each thought is minutely investigated—it becomes a folio.

Where the mind, or wisdom is concerned, touch the pendulum, the instrument is in action. There a subject, simple and unadorned, productive of utility, will receive all its merits.

Seated in a country far distant from the schools of knowledge, our residence being amongst plain, incult, honest men, to whom we address ourselves, we would shun the swell of words, with the same caution as we would censure; but reflecting on time, place, and circumstance, we

must bear down with a heavier hand, we must strike with a bolder brush.

In treating of the Legislative and Executive provinces, we introduced supposition to elucidate; proceeding on the Judicial, the figure may be equally explanatory and useful.

Having in view a sage Judge (Lord Coke) the oracle of the law, not in his words, but from his page, permit us to produce a wondrous striking portrait. —Figure to your mind the Parliament of Great-Britain incontinently passing a law, such as the *Evangelical pillars*, the *holy props* of all governments, *piously* forged in the fifth year of the reign of Richard II. enjoining the bible orthodox christians of England, to take an oath and swear *to fall down* and worship the fashioned things of priestly, superstitious imagination (*images*) in open violation of holy religion, of the immutable, moral, and eternal law of God. —Mr. Rymer, in his MS of Parliamentary proceedings, *comfortably* informs us, that the Godly Priests, Masters in Divinity, Ambassadors from Heaven, under this law, to the glory of *their* God, piously and devoutly *burnt many a goodly Briton*.

Figure to your mind a *subject pointed out* a victim to holy sacrifice. A man as moral as *Spinosa*, or as learned and virtuous as the metaphysical *Servitus*, to whom the faculty are indebted for the knowledge of the circulation of the blood: —the pages we have read, blush recording the fate of these worthies.

Figure to your mind the horrid writ *de haeretico comburendo* (to burn heretics) to be issued—The procession appears, headed by a mitred Monk, attended by a fanatic, enthusiastic band of chaste, well tithed Fathers—the oppressed, virtuous, trembling burnt-offering is produced, cloathed in his *auto de fe faubeneto jacket*, highly emblazoned in orthodox painting, presenting a figure too infernal for a common law Judge to view without terror, sufficient to affright humanity:

“To gallow the very wanderers of the dark.” *Shakespeare*. The Judges in the calm wisdom of philosophy, appointed for life—nobly independent—placed above the influence of power and private malice—girt around with virtue, *justum et tenacem*—possessed of the process and the subject of the frightful cavalcade!!!

This is a stand big with important business. In what manner would the judges (whom we have already described) conduct themselves? They would take an *advisare*, remit the oppressed citizen—they would remonstrate to their Monarch, saying, “Great and mighty Sire, on the “superb day of your coronation you took an awful oath, the most sacred “ligument of government, by which you religiously swore to govern the “nation by the ancient laws of the land: —This law is against the ancient “laws of the land, holy religion, it is *malum in se*. We, your Judges, “by our oaths, which we hold inviolate, are sacredly and doubly bound “to your Majesty and the laws: By the constitution of the kingdom, “we are the keepers of the conscience of the King, by the majesty of “the people elected to rule over them.” *Fiat justitia, rurat Coelum*. —No Lawyer or Commentator, to our knowledge, hath proceeded further.

The *Doved Fanatic* may say, the example is too highly coloured; he may exclaim the piece is unnatural—it is the production of a Flemish painter. No, it is the language, say the painting of an honest and simple man. Examples apt presented themselves, apropos in file. Religion was out of our sight: Dehors the business. Puppies will yelp; suffer this as an apology to the ingenious and candid reader.

ARATUS.

*From Flagellator Scurrarum*¹

Mess. Printers,

If the modern *Aratus*, who appears in the front of your paper of the 7th instant, thinks himself assisted by the genius of the ancient astrologer of *that name*, and therefore a conjurer, I beg leave to think for myself: But if he thinks that through a long line of *transmigrations*, his *carcase* is animated by the *soul* of a *patriotic Prince* of that name, and that he is therefore the *presumptive heir* to his *signature*, no body ought to believe him; for the patriotism of that Prince was *real and consistent*—his is but pretention, as manifestly appears before he finishes that *laboured performance*—that complete exemplification of *Horace's Mountain in travel*.

While I was amused with his philological parade and affectation, I began to think the *whole* no more than a singular and very curious display of *patriotism*; but he soon convinced me of the contrary, by his freedom with the *Legislature* and his impious ridicule of the *main support* of our government, namely *scripture revelation*: For to say the least, it is admitted, I believe, on all hands, by men of sense, that the *religion* of any country, is the *surest and most permanent support* of its government. But the fictitious and absurd *Aratus*, under a *disguise of friendship for his country*, strikes at this *main pillar* of government, with all the force that imbecility can exert, and malignity inspire. And while this *mountain of absurdity* is miserably convulsed, and labours hard with the throes of a *sterile imagination*, so as even to astonish his readers, "Out comes the ridiculous mouse!!!"

Should the *learned Aratus* think himself roughly treated, let him comfort himself with another parade of his erudition; but let him beware of wantonly turning up his *posteriors* again, for should they not be so *lean* as to excite compassion, they will probably meet with some attention from

Flagellator Scurrarum.

*From a Farmer*²

Mess. Printers,

YOU have a curious kind of correspondent. He sometimes calls himself by one name and sometimes by another: for I can always know him by his factious spirit and manner of writing. I remember when he

¹ *Ibid.*, 28 May, 1789.

² *Ibid.*, 11 June, 1789.

took it in his head to abuse the Assembly and Justices of the Peace, as a parcel of stupid, ignorant and wicked rascals, he called himself *An Independent Citizen*. At another time, to vent a fit of ill humour, he said a great many trifling and absurd things, and then called himself *A Juryman*. After that, when he undertook to out-do the Devil himself in maliciousness, and the pride of being thought a man of learning, he signed himself *A Citizen and Soldier*. And now, in his two last frantic performances, by the name of *Aratus*, he seems to be growing still more crazy. In short I am afraid he'll run mad and do mischief, I cannot tell what he would be at, or what is the design of those two pieces, unless from a conceit of his superior abilities, he has undertaken to teach the Governor and Judges their duty; and to abuse the scriptures. It may be his great learning for what I know that makes him so unintelligible to *me*, a man of plain sense, who can just read and write a little. However, if learning has a tendency to make the man so devilish proud, discontented [discontented] and quarrelsome, I thank God that I am not cursed with more than I have common sense to manage.

Poor man, may be he is a discontented lawyer; distracted by the jarring interests of pride and poverty. And the plaguy Assembly have put it out of his power to acquire enough in any reasonable time to satisfy the claims of either, by suffering the Justices to do so much business out of court, and at the same time putting it in their power to over-hawl *him*, if he should take a fee agreeable to his learning and consequence; so that in fact it is no wonder if he should run as mad as a March hare. Yet I should be glad, and I dare say many more, if he would leave off to fill up so much of your otherwise agreeable and useful paper with his learned scribblings.

A FARMER.

*From Observer*¹

Tyrrel, July 21, 1789.

Messrs. Printers,

'Tis reported that in the vicinity of a plaitain a spider bit a toad several turns, in a short space of time: that the latter effected a cure of poison by eating a piece of the plaitain as often as attacked by the former. A by-stander observing them, pulled up the plaitain, which the toad missed after another pass at his antagonist, and instantly flung himself on his back and expired.

Aratus in the vicinity of flatterers swelled badly in point of composition. *Flagellator Scurrarum* perceived him making mouths, was provoked and bit him with his fly letter. *Aratus* affecting to laugh about it, found some coxcomb, who still could flatter his vanity, so got cured of his wound, and very soon tried another effort against his opponent. In the mean time the *Farmer* got a gripe at *Aratus*: and has probably excited risibleness in his plaitain-friends, insomuch that the corrosiveness of *Flagellator Scurrarum's* next attack will effect the heroe's fatal execution, and throw him flat on his back.

¹ *Ibid.*, 30 July, 1789.

Should *Aratus* summons me to an interview, as he has others, perhaps the distance will not prevent, at his interment, the attendance of his humble servant.

OBSERVATOR.

*From Diogenes*¹

Perquimans, July 26, 1789.

Gentlemen,

It seems not a little surprising that you should suffer this *thing*, or this *no thing*, which calls *itself* ARATUS, to fill so much of your paper with *its* tedious and unintelligible performances.

Or is it really the ghost of *Aratus* that is come to haunt us for our sins? And to scare us "With Gorgons, Hydras, and chimeras dire!" And will nothing quiet this *busy, scribbling, messing, perturbed spirit*? Is there to be no end to its wanderings? "Another yet; and yet another still!" Cannot the holy wand of the *Prophet* lay the restless phantom?

But if he is indeed a man of flesh, he should regard it; and bear in mind the threatened rod of the *fool-whipper*, which above all he ought to dread.

Will this *weaver of minionet*, this *spinner of cobweb*, this *frothy syllabub of asses milk* never be done? Must this meer clangor perpetually pester us with noise and nausea? —Common sense forbid it.

Yet might the *dreamer* go on to deal out his crude and ill suited materials unnoticed by me, were it not that he takes up so much of your paper, which otherwise would contain, as formerly, subjects both useful and pleasing.

While the important affairs that are now transacting both at home and abroad, afford such ample funds for interesting intelligence, it is to be hoped *Aratus* will no longer find room for his unmeaning, perplexed and flighty effusions.

I trust he will not, nor cannot, *unless he is extremely captious*, be offended at the liberal manner in which I have mentioned his productions; as I have endeavoured to observe every *possible* degree of gentleness, temper and decency. —Let him lay aside his fustian, and write intelligibly if he can, and I may bear to read him: But what can be the use of his writing what no mortal can understand.

DIOGENES.

N.B. I am apprehensive I have been mistaken in my conjectures concerning *Aratus*. As since writing the above I have accounts from the family of the *Apes's*, or as *Aratus* stiles them, the Jack-a-napes's, by which I learn that the whole family are exceedingly rejoiced that they will have it in their power through your means to discover their long lost kinsman *Aratus Apes*. They are positive that he is of their family, although he has thought proper to suppress his surname. And notwithstanding a vile report which they have heard, of his cutting off his tail to look like a man; yet they speak with great affection of their dear *Rati*,

¹ *Loc. cit.*

for they cannot believe that he could ever be so weak as to part with that beautiful, useful and distinguishing ornament of the *Ape*, merely from the poor affectation of imitating *man*: which in spite of all his efforts, he ought to be sensible, it would be impossible for him to effect in any tolerable degree. I further learn that a number of gentlemen and ladies of the family have it in contemplation to pay their beloved *Rati* a visit as soon as fruit comes in plenty. A visit before, they apprehend, would put him to great inconvenience; as it might be difficult, for him to provide for so large and respectable a company. They are preparing some little matters expressive of their affection, and amongst the rest they intend to present him with some *nuts to crack*, as a rarity. This intelligence may be depended upon, as it comes from the best authority. Apropos, supposing the above report to be true, will it not be indispensably necessary and proper for *Aratus* to provide himself with a tail, that he may appear a finished *Ape*? For malice itself cannot say that he wants any thing else to compleat him. —I mention this only as a friendly hint.

